

THE
CONDUCT
OF THE
ADMIRALTY,
IN THE LATE EXPEDITION OF THE
ENEMY
TO THE
COAST of IRELAND,
AS STATED BY
MINISTERS,
IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS,
ON THE 3d OF MARCH, 1797:

With an AUTHENTIC COPY of the OFFICIAL PAPERS on that Subject,
ordered to be printed by PARLIAMENT.

LONDON:
PRINTED for JOHN STOCKDALE,
PICCADILLY.

1797.

[Price Two Shillings and Six Pence.]

*K Great Britain
belaid
Admiral*



САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГСКОЕ УЧЕБНОЕ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЕ
МОСКОВСКОГО УНИВЕРСИТЕТА

МОСКОВСКОГО УНИВЕРСИТЕТА

T H E CONDUCT, &c.

C O N D U C T, &c.

THE security and defence of these Kingdoms against Foreign Invasion must, in a great degree, depend upon the state, the arrangement, and the well-regulated direction of our Naval Forces in time of war.

With the reliance every Englishman had justly placed on this protection, it cannot, therefore, be matter of surprize, that the Parliament and the Public should have manifested a considerable anxiety to receive from Government an explanation, as minute as circumstances and prudence would admit, of the steps taken by the Admiralty to prevent or defeat the late Expedition of the Enemy against the Coast of Ireland.

Parliament met, after the recess, on the 14th of February, and on the 17th Mr. Whitbread, in the House of Commons, gave notice of a motion upon this subject. Few questions, perhaps, were ever brought before the House, in which, previous to the discussion, the advantage, on the one hand, of popular prejudices, accidental alarms, and general rumours, were more decidedly in favor of Opposition; and, on the other, in which Administra-

tion had not only to contend with these difficulties out of doors, but, in the House, to meet the judgement of many too reasonable to draw conviction from opinions, however prevalent and popular; too candid to condemn on the evidence of rumours, however credited and general; and too firm to yield to the panic of exaggerated alarms; but certainly more or less under the influence of these impressions, beset with doubts which bare assertions could not clear up, and fraught with suspicions, which a connected chain of unequivocal proofs could alone remove. It cannot be denied, that the issue of this Expedition, however unfavorable to the Enemy, had also been felt as a disappointment in this country; and that in a War like this, of uniform Naval Superiority, and uninterrupted Naval Success, the Public, with expectations, sanguine in proportion to these advantages, was entitled to an explanation of the causes by which, in this instance, they were frustrated.

This statement was first given to the House, in a most able and perspicuous speech, by Mr. Dundas, who rose to answer Mr. Whitbread. It is from this speech, and from the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the same debate, that the following Facts have been selected, with a reference to the distinct proofs on which they respectively rest, as they appear in the documents laid before the House, in support of their assertions.

Our reasons for giving this statement to the Public, in it's present shape, are, the extreme importance of the question; the impossibility, from it's complicated nature, and the variety of dates, orders and communications on which it's merits rest, of it's being accurately stated in any of the Parliamentary Reports; and an anxiety, no less urgent in policy than in justice, that the Department entrusted with the most essential part of our Public Force, should not suffer in the Public opinion.

It was with this last impression upon his mind that Mr. Dundas, at the outset of his speech, thanked Mr. Whitbread for the opportunity he had given him of laying before the House and the Public every circumstance relative

relative to the Expedition, necessary to establish a complete justification of the Admiralty and of the Naval Officers employed on the occasion, and that he pledged himself to withhold no official communication, which could be thought necessary by any impartial man for this purpose. Papers of intelligence, and information procured by secret means, the House could not expect ; they could not be laid before them without endangering the Public safety, and the safety of individuals ; to which the House would not consent. They were, moreover, unnecessary to the present enquiry, as far as it went to ascertain the steps taken by the Admiralty on the occasion, and whether those steps were such as called for the approbation or censure of that House and of the Country.

Having premised with these assurances, Mr. Dundas proceeded to state the two following propositions, as those which he should undertake to prove to the House, namely,

1st. That the orders given, and the measures taken, in obedience to those orders, were such as could leave no ground for blame, and would, on the contrary, afford a complete justification of the Admiralty, and of the Officers employed under them.

2d. That calculated, as those orders and those measures were, to ensure, (as far as human judgement and foresight could effect) the defeat of the Enemy's designs, by the destruction of their Expedition, that destruction was only prevented by the state of the weather.

Pledging himself to produce incontrovertible proofs of these two propositions, he disclaimed all indulgence or confidence on the part of the House, and had only to call upon their impartiality, and to request their attention.

When Parliament met on the 6th of October last, His Majesty stated to the House, that the Enemy had manifested a design of invading these kingdoms ;

kingdoms ; and, in conformity to His Majesty's invitation, the House immediately proceeded to adopt such measures of internal defence as appeared best calculated to repel or defeat any hostile attempt on this Country. Whilst the attention of Parliament was called to this important object, it was the obvious duty of Administration to consider in what manner the Naval Force, then at their disposal, could be most advantageously employed to counteract and prevent such designs in their outset, consistently, at the same time, with the continuance of the protection due to our Commerce and Convoys, to our distant Possessions, to the safety of our Allies, and with the annoyance of the Commerce and Maritime Pursuits of the Enemy. Each of these subjects required a distinct consideration ; each, separately, was too important to be overlooked ; whilst the arrangement of the whole was to be combined, for the purpose of mutual support and joint co-operation.

The account called for in Parliament being confined to the particular subject of the Attempt against Ireland, it cannot be necessary to enter into the detail of other Naval operations, which were proceeding at the same time. Some of them had a collateral connexion with the steps taken for opposing that Attempt, and to these it may be necessary to have a short occasional reference. Others, more remote and detached, will not require any specific notice, and are only generally adverted to here, as tending materially to give weight to a consideration, in our opinion, not sufficiently impressed upon the Public Mind. We mean the consideration arising from the different situation of this Country and of the Enemy with respect to this Expedition. On their side were all the advantages which belong to Offensive War—of choosing the time and the mode of commencing their operations, and of determining beforehand the precise point to which they should be directed ; whilst no intelligence we could procure, no precaution or diligence we could employ, could fix our conjectures, or enable us to act with the same degree of certainty on these points. But were these the only circumstances favorable to them on this occasion ? Is there no difference between France, directing it's Naval Force to this single Expedition, and England, with a Force certainly infinitely superior, but distributed for the safety

safety of our Possessions in every part of the World, protecting our numerous Convoys on every Sea, watching and humbling our other Maritime Enemies in other quarters, and successfully contending for Naval Superiority in all?—Is there no difference between a Power, resolving to risk, in one desperate attempt, the whole remains of a Fleet once formidable, but now, by a succession of disasters certainly unavailing, and, by the peculiar circumstances of that Country, perhaps unnecessary for the general purposes of Maritime War; and a Power whose resources, security, and almost it's existence, depend on a constant attention to all these purposes? Let the exertions by which our Navy has contributed to our invaluable Foreign Conquests in the East and West Indies—Let our trade, every where protected and increased, that of the Enemy every where interrupted and destroyed—Let the 1st of June 1794—the 23d of June 1795—the capture at Saldanha Bay—the 14th of February 1797, tell how efficaciously all these measures have been fulfilled.

The protection of our own Coasts may be our first, but is not our only object. In every channel, through which Foreign Commerce and Foreign Possessions contribute to the wealth and prosperity of these kingdoms, we have a stake to defend and preserve, whilst the Enemy, differently situated, were at liberty to risk their only stake upon one desperate adventure.

A few moments reflexion on these observations will induce every considerate person to make a fair allowance for the different situation of the two Governments in this respect; and it is at present the less necessary to proceed further in them, as they are thrown out on this occasion to shew the arduous task and general merit of our Naval Administration; and by no means with a view of accounting for any supposed deficiency of Force, or want of readiness on our part, during the attempt to invade Ireland. If our ships had been unprepared, or inadequate to meet the Enemy, great blame would certainly attach to the Admiralty; but as they would have deserved no indulgence, it is now necessary to shew they want none for any deficiency or remissness in these respects.

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From an early period of the preparations of the Enemy for this Expedition, it appears that Administration received regular and correct intelligence of its progress; but that there were considerable and frequent variations in the reports of their Secret Agents with respect to its destination. At one time some principal possession of this Country out of Europe; at another, Gibraltar was said to be their object; but about the middle of October, when the Equipment began to assume a more regular shape, Ministers obtained such information as left them no room to doubt that the intended point of attack was either Ireland or Portugal. It is indeed by no means improbable that the French Government had both these objects in contemplation, and that no final preference was given to either, until a very short time before the sailing of the Expedition. This cannot be stated as a positive fact, but as matter of reasonable opinion and conjecture; founded on several circumstances, unnecessary and inconvenient to disclose. We shall therefore not dwell upon them, nor shall we advert to certain occurrences, which, upon this supposition, may, in our opinion, have contributed to determine the French Directory to make their attempt upon Ireland. How far these occurrences might be traced to the public declarations and conduct of a Party amongst ourselves is certainly a point of discussion not entirely unconnected with the present enquiry; as it makes, however, no part of the justification of the Admiralty, it is not our design to throw out charges against others. Our statement requires no such assistance. We purposely pass over in silence the mischievous effects of party violence, the better to defy the suspicion that recrimination makes any part of our defence.

To proceed in our subject, it appears that as soon as Ministers were possessed of certain intelligence that the designs of the Enemy were confined either to Ireland or to Portugal, the Instructions (No. 1.) in the Appendix were transmited on the 21st of October to Vice Admiral Thomson, then in the command of the British Squadron off Brest. We shall not discuss these Instructions, because, in the debate, they were allowed, by all sides, to be perfectly proper, and well adapted to the circumstances under which they were given. They direct the Admiral to take the most effectual means

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of watching the movements of the Enemy, not to be diverted from the principal object of intercepting the Expedition by any partial Sailing of any of their Ships of War; and lastly, in case of it's putting to Sea and standing to the Southward, to send information thereof to Vice Admiral Vandeput at Lisbon; in case of it's taking a course to the Northward, to Vice Admiral Kingsmill at Cork; and in either case to send an account thereof to the nearest Port in England.

On the 25th of October Vice Admiral Colpoys was appointed to succeed Vice Admiral Thomson, (who had been ordered to proceed to Gibraltar) and took the command of the Squadron off Brest on the 29th of October, acting under the same orders as his predecessor. The better to enable the Vice Admiral to fulfil his instructions, Sir Edward Pellew, with his Squadron of Frigates, was put under his orders, and stationed by the Vice Admiral off Brest, to reconnoitre at the time of the departure of the Enemy's Squadron from thence. The unremitting activity and enterprizing spirit of Sir Edward Pellew, joined to his local knowledge of Brest Water, rendered him peculiarly proper for this Service. His brilliant Success in the present War can have left no doubt to the Enemy or to ourselves of his possessing, in an eminent degree, the qualities we have now ascribed to him. The duty he had to fulfil called for an Officer of this description. The Choice was equal to the importance of the Trust, creditable to Sir Edward and to the Admiralty, a proof of confidence honorable to the former, of vigilance and attention no less honorable to the latter.

The Enemy, it appears, got under weigh on the 15th of December, and put to Sea on the 16th. On the former day Sir Edward Pellew, observing them getting under weigh in Brest Harbour, sent information thereof to Vice Admiral Colpoys *; and at Seven in the Morning of the 16th he sent a Lugger under his orders to the Marlborough, (the look-out Ship of the Vice Admiral's Fleet) with a Message, stating, *that he hoped soon to be able to determine if the Enemy's Fleet was gone to Sea or had anchored in*

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* Inclosure (A) in No. 5. of the Appendix.

Baribeaume, and that he would bis Report by the Frigate * Both these communications were received on the 16th by the Vice Admiral, who was then lying not more than Nine Leagues from Brest ; but the subsequent Report, which Sir Edward dispatched a few hours afterwards by the Revolutionnaire Frigate, did not reach the Vice Admiral till the 22d ; nor was Sir Edward himself more fortunate in falling in with him, notwithstanding his utmost exertions to this effect.

The circumstances and reasons of this mortifying disappointment are so forcibly stated in Vice Admiral Colpoys's Letter of the 18th of December, that we cannot forbear restating the them in his own words : “ *Since the 16th at day-break (he says) I have had no tidings whatever of Sir Edward Pellew, or the French Fleet ; nor from the state of the Winds and Weather was it possible to have had any ; for they have been as adverse to my wishes as the Enemy could desire* †.” Can any language describe more distinctly the situation of the Fleet at that moment ? Is there an Englishman who, in Vice Admiral Colpoys's situation, would have been a stranger to those wishes of which he speaks in such emphatic terms ?—If there be—he must be a stranger indeed to Courage, to Glory, to every generous feeling of Public Spirit and National Pride, glowing in the gallant Admiral's breast when he wrote these Words :—“ *They are as adverse to my wishes as the Enemy could desire.* ”—What but this hazy weather, and these adverse winds, could have saved the Enemy from defeat in this very outset of the Expedition ? The Fleet under Vice Admiral Colpoys, consisted of Fifteen Sail of the Line, Four of which were of Three Decks—a force certainly equal, at least, to that of the Enemy, consisting of Sixteen Sail of Two-decked Ships ; even putting wholly out of the question the superior equipment, skill and seamanship on the part of the British Fleet, and the incumbered and unserviceable state of that of the Enemy. Here then, in the first instance, we find the French Fleet owing its escape to the Elements ;—how far its subsequent preservation against the superiority and vigilance of our Forces, and its ultimate return to Port, may be ascribed to the interposition of the same Causes, will appear from the observations

* Inclosure in No. 6. of the Appendix.

† Appendix, No. 6.

vations we shall hereafter have occasion to make. But we cannot proceed without remarking that the Enemy themselves were so convinced, on the one hand, of their inability to meet the British Fleet; and on the other, of the difficulty of escaping it, in ordinary weather, and by steering the ordinary and safe course out of Brest, that all the risks of hazy and tempestuous weather, and of a dangerous, unfrequented passage out, were submitted to, in order to avoid the greater risk of an engagement. Owing to this manœuvre we find one of their Line of Battle Ships was lost going through the Bec du Raz, and near a thousand men were drowned *.

Several circumstances, it appears, and possibly the state of the intelligence at the time of the Enemy's sailing, induced Sir Edward Pellew and Vice Admiral Colpoys (as soon as he heard of their being at Sea) to believe they were destined to act against Portugal.

We have nothing to observe upon this opinion, formed upon circumstances and the intelligence of the moment; but it is of great importance to consider the conduct of Admiral Colpoys, subsequent to the 22d of December, and the grounds which regulated that conduct until his arrival at Spithead.

His letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty of the 23d †, and his journal ‡ will enable us to decide upon the one and the other. Under the uncertainty in which, from want of intelligence, he remained until the 22d, whether the Enemy were gone to sea, or returned to port, and with the great probability, in case of the former event, of their having been so dispersed by the tempestuous weather as to be obliged to return to port, he very judiciously determined to endeavour to preserve his station off Brest, as the most likely place of receiving, on the one hand, intelligence which might clear up his doubts, or orders from home which might direct his subsequent motions, and on the other, of intercepting the Enemy, in case

* Inclosure in No. 27, Appendix.

† Appendix, No. 26.

‡ Ditto, No. 41.

of their separation and return*. His opinion that their Fleet was dispersed, was certainly well founded, and his having fallen in on the 20th with an Enemy's Squadron † of Six Sail, steering for Brest, naturally confirmed his expectation that some, if not all the Divisions of it, were attempting to return to port. Under these circumstances, it is impossible to contend, that his determination to remain on his station was not the most judicious that could be formed; but when, from the increasing violence of the weather, he found it impracticable to retain it any longer, without the greatest danger of being dispersed and totally disabled, he directed his ships, in case of separation, not to return to port, but to collect off the Lizard, as a point from which he might most easily return to his station, or proceed to any other quarter; and he gave information of this rendezvous to the Admiralty, by which he certainly made, at the same time, the most effectual arrangement his situation would admit of, for receiving orders, intelligence, or reinforcements from home. As he had foreseen, the heavy gale from the south-west in some degree dispersed and damaged his Fleet, and when the ships, according to orders, attempted to bring-to off the Lizard, its increasing violence was such that they could not, without the utmost risk of being totally disabled or lost, remain at that rendezvous. In this predicament, some of the ships, having parted company, made Plymouth and the Western ports, and on the 31st of December the Admiral anchored at Spithead with only Six Sail of the Line.

We should here terminate that part of our explanation which relates to Admiral Colpoys's conduct, with a full confidence of having sufficiently established that no imputation of blame can attach on the arrangements or the

* The impression upon Admiral Colpoys's mind, from balancing the different intelligence he had received, appears evidently, from his correspondence, to have been, that the Enemy had continued to steer a southerly course, and that the Expedition was probably directed against Lisbon. If he had therefore quitted his station, he must have acted in consequence of that impression, and have proceeded off the Coast of Portugal, a course widely different from that which the Enemy had actually taken.

† This Squadron, it is now known, was a Division which had been sent from Toulon under Admiral Villeneuve.

the instructions of the Admiralty, with respect to his Squadron, and that every thing which skill and judgment could suggest, was attempted by the Admiral, as well to fulfil his instructions, as in the exercise of his discretionary power, under all the unforeseen circumstances we have already stated; but, before we take leave of this subject, we must say a few words in answer to an idle, but general rumour, that the Squadron was prevented from following the Enemy, and obliged to return to port, from want of water and provisions. The refutation of this absurd falsehood lies in a very few words. The intention, more than once expressed by Admiral Colpoys, in his correspondence to which we have so often referred, of following the Enemy to Portugal or elsewhere, as soon as he should receive intelligence of the course they had steered, would be, to every candid man, a sufficient presumption that he did not want stores or provisions for such a voyage; but the fact is incontrovertibly proved by the state and condition of the respective ships of the Squadron, as reported on their return to port, to which Paper * we shall therefore refer, with the following single observation only. It is a frequent practice of ships at sea, to afford assistance of Provisions, Stores and Water, to each other, according to their respective means or exigencies. This practice, however, is liable to the occasional interruption of the weather not permitting the necessary communication for the purpose; but, in general, care is taken to provide against such casualties in the intervals of fair weather, before the stock of any particular Ship is so far reduced, as to expose it to real distress from the temporary occurrence of a Gale of Wind; so that it is not unfair in argument, to consider the state and condition of the Fleet from the average of the supply; but, in this instance, no charge of neglect could be substantiated by the more minute inspection of each Ship; although, from having been longer at Sea, or other circumstances stated in the report itself, some were certainly not so fully provided as others. The case of the *Powerful* making a signal, on the 25th of December, that she could no longer keep company, and her arrival in Ireland, with a very small supply of water, will, I am aware, be quoted as a particular fact against the general mode of reasoning; but it must be observed, that this ship was in want of repair, and that the

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* Appendix, No. 39.

Admiral consequently, having foreseen the necessity of sending her soon into Port, had either not thought it necessary to supply her from other ships with a greater proportion of articles than would be necessary for that purpose, or that, from the same motive, he had withdrawn a part of her supplies for the use of the remainder of the Fleet. But, on whatever supposition we proceed, the separation of one damaged ship, and her return to port, are events neither extraordinary in themselves, nor affording, in the present case, any ground whatever for censure, and which certainly would have made but little difference in the result, had it been the good fortune of Admiral Colpoys to have fallen in with the Enemy's Squadron.

Before we enter upon the next part of this discussion, which relates to the proceedings of the Squadron which sailed from Spithead on the 3d of January, 1797, under the command of Admiral Lord Bridport, it will be necessary to state, in a few words, a circumstance respecting an anterior service, on which a principal part of the Ships of this Squadron had been employed, previous to their last return into port to refit. On the 16th of August 1796, these ships were sent on a cruize off Brest, under the command of Rear Admiral Sir R. Curtis, and Vice Admiral Thompson sailed on the 15th of October to relieve him; but information having been then received of the Enemy's Squadron, under Admiral Richery, being on its return from Newfoundland, it was thought necessary that Sir Roger Curtis, instead of returning immediately into port, should be detached with eight sail of the line and two frigates, in hopes of intercepting it; and accordingly, on the 18th of October, he was ordered to cruize for the Enemy off Rochfort during fourteen days, and then to return to the Admiral's rendezvous off Brest in the first instance, which he did on the 7th of November. Admiral Colpoys (who had then assumed the command) having received subsequent intelligence of Admiral Richery, Sir R. Curtis was dispatched a second time on a cruize to the southward, from which he did not return to Spithead till the 18th of November. Thus we find that these ships were kept at sea with a view of intercepting Richery, at least one month after they had been relieved by Admiral Thompson. This service not only retarded their refitting, which

which would otherwise have commenced a month sooner, but by having been kept so much longer at sea, they had necessarily more defects to repair, and a greater deficiency of stores and provisions to replace *. It was the intention of the Admiralty to have sent them to relieve the ships under Admiral Colpoys, and accordingly, on the 16th of December, four days before any accounts were received of the French Fleet having sailed, the Astrea Frigate was actually dispatched to Admiral Colpoys to inform him that in a few days Lord Bridport would relieve him with ten sail of the line, and enable him, by this reinforcement, to bring in such ships of his Squadron as might have been longest at sea. In this intention Lord Bridport hoisted his flag at Spithead on the 19th of December. On the 20th accounts were received by the Admiralty from Sir E. Pellew of the French Fleet having left Brest. This intelligence rendered it necessary to make a new arrangement for the Squadron under Lord Bridport; for as it was uncertain what course the French Fleet had steered, it became necessary to detain the ships that were ready, till as many more could be fitted as would form a Squadron equal to that of the Enemy. In order to shew at once the necessity and importance of this precaution, let us suppose (what at that time was certainly possible, and to be apprehended) that Admiral Colpoys had been led to look for the Enemy in a direction which they had not taken, for instance towards the Coast of Portugal, where he must have proceeded if he had felt himself justified in quitting his station at all, and acting upon such conjectures as the intelligence he had received induced him at the time to consider as the most plausible, what would have been the consequence? That they might have been on the Coast of Ireland, in the neighbourhood of the Channel, or even in the Channel, and on our own Coasts with a fleet superior to ours. The consideration of this case, which might have happened, in the supposition we have now stated, was fully sufficient to determine the Admiralty to detain Lord Bridport for a very few days, until some additional ships, then in great forwardness, could be made compleatly ready to proceed with him.

Other

* The whole of Sir R. Curtis's Squadron, with the single exception of the Pompee, formed a part of Lord Bridport's Fleet. The seven others were the Formidable, Atlas, Cæsar, Mars, Triumph, Orion, and Irresistible.

Other suppositions suggested nothing which could over-rule a due attention to this contingency ; for in reasoning upon them, the Admiralty could only conclude either that Admiral Colpoys would be so fortunate as to follow the Enemy in the course they had taken, or that he would remain on his station, until he should receive such intelligence as might enable him to proceed with certainty in their pursuit. There was nothing in either of these cases which called so urgently for Lord Bridport's departure, as to compensate for the more probable risk of the first case. As long as Admiral Colpoys was on his station, he was in the best possible way of receiving intelligence. If, by leaving it, he had met with the Enemy, there could be no doubt that our wishes were accomplished, and their designs defeated. If he had left it without meeting with them, we of course return to the argument of our first supposition.

It was therefore the duty of the Admiralty to act upon the first supposition, and accordingly, from this moment, the force at Spithead placed under Lord Bridport was sufficiently augmented to enable him to meet the Enemy's Fleet, without depending upon any reinforcement from other quarters, except one ship of the line and a frigate, which were to join him from Plymouth, on his passage down Channel. On the 20th* the intelligence of the Enemy's being at sea was transmitted to Lord Bridport, with orders to use every means in his power to get the ships under his command in a state of readiness to put to sea. Lord Bridport acknowledged the receipt of this order on the 21st †, and stated his opinion and expectation that he should be ready to sail on the 24th or 25th. It has been urged, as a charge of neglect upon the Admiralty, that Lord Bridport's Fleet could not be completely ready in less than four days. After the circumstances we have already stated of the situation on the 16th of December, of the more limited force, with which Lord Bridport was then to have relieved Admiral Colpoys, and of the causes which had retarded the refitting of that force, we scarcely think such a charge will be thought to deserve any further answer, or be found in

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* Appendix, No. 7.

† Appendix, No. 8.

any respect applicable to the emergency which rendered necessary a more extensive scale of preparation. On the contrary, if any allowance is made for the shortness of the days at that period of the year, and the frequent interruption to which all communication from the harbour and dock-yard with the shipping at Spithead is liable from the weather, during those few hours of day-light, the exertions by which the fleet was compleatly prepared in so short a time, will appear highly creditable to the Admiralty and the other departments concerned, and an irrefragable proof, that on the 20th of December they were in a very forward state of preparation.

On the 22d of December Lord Bridport was furnished with Instructions * to endeavour, in the first instance, to join Admiral Colpoys upon his rendezvous, and in case of not finding him there, and of there being reason to believe that he had quitted it in quest of the Enemy, then to make a shew of his force off Brest; and having so done, in case he should not have been able to obtain any certain intelligence of the French Fleet being in the neighbourhood, to proceed off Cape Clear, from whence, if no information of the Enemy could be obtained on the Coast of Ireland, he was to return off Brest.

On the 24th Lord Bridport was furnished with further Instructions †, directing him, as soon as he should have joined Vice-Admiral Colpoys, to proceed with seventeen sail of the line directly off Cape Clear, without endeavouring to make a shew of his force off Brest; and if he should not very soon fall in with the Vice-Admiral, without suffering any delay by looking for him, to proceed off Cape Clear with the ships already under his command.

It is particularly important to call the attention of the Public to this second order, given seven days before any intelligence reached this country of the Enemy being really on the Coast of Ireland; because, by placing in so strong a point of view the attention of Government to the security and defence

fence of our Sister Kingdom, under circumstances of doubt ; first, whether the Enemy had directed their operations to that quarter, and, secondly, whether, in that case, Vice-Admiral Colpoys might not have already followed them thither, we think it affords, without further discussion, a compleat answer to every charge of remissness or neglect with respect to the safety of Ireland.

In conformity to Lord Bridport's statement in his letter of the 21st, the Fleet was ready and got under weigh on the 25th, at One P. M. Unfortunately, from the zeal and eagerness so natural to British Officers putting to sea under such circumstances, two of the ships, (the Sanspareille and Prince) ran foul of each other, and a third (the Atlas) got on shore. These untoward circumstances were rendered more distressing by the state of the wind and tide in the evening of that day being such as to prevent several other ships reaching St. Helen's ; so that Lord Bridport found himself obliged to come to anchor there with only eight sail, in order to wait for the remainder, which he had then every reason to expect would join him the next day. Those who judge of human undertakings without enquiry or reflection, and blindly award blame or commendation, according as the result accords with their wishes and expectations, have censured Lord Bridport for not proceeding with eight sail only, instead of waiting a few hours for the remainder. No man, however prejudiced, will, we conceive, adhere to this hasty decision, which strikes unjustly at the character of a most gallant Officer, when he reflects for a moment that the first accounts of the Enemy's Fleet being dispersed and on the coast of Ireland did not reach this country till the 31st of December ; that nothing was known of Admiral Colpoys's movements, and consequently that at this period nothing had occurred to alter or weaken the considerations we have already stated against his going with ten sail of the line. Besides, could it be expected Lord Bridport should foresee that as long as the wind continued favourable for his going to sea from St. Helen's, it would be such as to prevent a junction of the six ships then detained at Spithead ? This however was the real state of affairs, during the 26th and 27th of December, as is fully proved by the letters from Admiral Sir Peter

Peter Parker to Mr. Nepean * of the 26th, 27th, and 28th of that month. On the 28th the wind changed, and became unfavourable for proceeding from St. Helen's. On the 29th the whole Squadron collected at St. Helen's, where they were detained by the wind till the 3d of January, when they sailed for their destination. Among the idle surmises which have been made on the detention of the Fleet, during the 26th and 27th of December, there are two which it may be necessary not to pass over in silence, because they obtained some credit with persons well intentioned, but ignorant of the real facts.

A message sent by the Telegraph, it has been said, was misunderstood by Lord Bridport. Admitting, for argument's sake, that there was such a mistake, how could any conclusion have been drawn from the fact itself, without knowing the contents of the message? But it appears, on the contrary, that the message by the Telegraph, to which allusion is made, was simply an order not to wait for the *Prince*, (an order not very likely to be misunderstood) and that owing to the violence of the gale at Spithead it could not be communicated to Lord Bridport at St. Helen's till the evening of the 27th †, when the wind became unfavourable for his proceeding to sea.

Another report more prevalent was, that the whole Fleet was detained on account of the *Sanspareille*, in deference to the gallant officer who had his flag on board that ship. The assertion stands refuted by Lord Bridport's letter of the 25th of December ‡; and we only mention it as a caution to credulous persons against receiving and circulating, on other occasions, rumours of this nature, imputing improper motives of conduct to officers of unblemished character, placed in situations of great responsibility. An officer actuated by the fairest incentives to honour would certainly have relinquished with great reluctance his chance of sharing in the glory, of which the prospect appeared then open to the British Fleet; but the base insinuation that, from this or any personal consideration, such an officer would at-

* Vide Appendix, Nos. 17, 18, 19. † Appendix, No. 20. ‡ Appendix, No. 15.

desire to retard a great public service, is too contemptible to require any answer.

The first intelligence of the Enemy's having appeared in Bantry Bay, and off the coast of Ireland, was received at the Admiralty late in the evening of the 31st of December *. It was not only immediately communicated to Lord Bridport †, but, as it appears, every exertion was instantly made to transmit it to Admiral Colpoys ‡ either off the Lizard or at his rendezvous. The causes which had driven him from both these stations, and the situation of his Squadron at this period, have been already explained. We must here observe, that it was not only by driving one of our Squadrons into port, and by retarding the departure of the other, that the unfavourable weather was conducive to the safety of the enemy ; it was no less so, by interrupting, for several days, all communication with Ireland. The division of the French Fleet, which anchored in Bantry Bay on the 24th of December, was first seen on the 21st by the *Kangaroo* sloop, which proceeded immediately for England with the intelligence ; but such was the violence of the weather, that, after a most dangerous passage, and a fruitless attempt to fall in with Admiral Colpoys, this vessel did not reach Plymouth till the 1st of January. The first letters received from Ireland on the 31st of December were dated the 29th, all the mails for the antecedent week being then due ; so that it is fair to infer that the weather alone prevented Government receiving the first account of the Enemy being on the coast of Ireland upon the 25th instead of the 31st of December. A very short retrospect will enable every man to judge of the advantages they probably derived from this delay. Orders dispatched to Admiral Colpoys on the 25th, instead of the 31st, would have found him at his rendezvous, or off the Lizard, and Lord Bridport would have sailed with the eight ships then at St. Helen's, a force of itself more than sufficient to capture or destroy the whole division of the Enemy's Fleet then on the coast of Ireland, leaving the remainder of his Squadron to follow as soon as possible.

Lord

* Appendix, No. 22. † Appendix, No. 23. ‡ Appendix, No. 24.

Lord Bridport, as we have already stated, sailed on the 3d of January, and we have only to add that, after every endeavour to intercept the Enemy on their return, and notwithstanding the many other cruizers we had then at sea, the greatest part of the Enemy's force returned safe to port. Their loss, however, by accidents of weather and captures, cannot be less than 5000 men, together with two ships of the line, and three frigates. Even in this last stage of the expedition the dispersion and damage the Enemy's Fleet had met with from the weather may be considered as having contributed to their safety. Returning by single ships, or in small divisions, driven in every direction, and having parted at different periods, they more easily escaped the notice of a superior Fleet cruizing for them, than if they had put back at the same time, or in larger numbers. Indeed such was their dispersion, such the difficulty of falling in with them any where, almost from the moment of their departure, that it is well known that the French frigate, with the Admiral and General on board who commanded the Expedition, having parted company the day after their sailing from Brest, remained at sea cruizing for the Fleet during a month, without ever once rejoining any part of it. As it cannot be supposed that these Officers had not a precise knowledge of the intended points of attack, of the different rendezvous in case of separation, and of the course the Fleet, under every circumstance, was most likely to steer, is it then matter of astonishment, much less of censure, that the British Admiral, acting upon conjectures only with respect to all these points, should not have been more successful?

It is impossible, before we conclude, not to reflect for a moment on the temper of the public mind during the period we have described, and on the effects of the disappointment, of which the causes are now before the world.

In Ireland every exertion that loyalty, fidelity and zeal could suggest, were displayed by the inhabitants of the parts threatened by the Enemy. The moment of danger appears to have been the moment of the greatest confidence in the extent of their own resources. Calm and orderly in their preparations, united and vigorous in their arrangements for defence, watching the

the movements of the Enemy without dismay, their whole proceedings evinced and justified a sense of rational and manly security, which, under such circumstances, can only exist and be supported on such foundations.

Whilst the alarm in Ireland roused the public spirit, and gave to the Government of that Kingdom an opportunity of calling upon the energy of the people, and to the people an honourable opportunity of manifesting their real dispositions towards Government, the Government and Public of this country received, without alarm, the intelligence of the Enemy's being on the Irish coast. On the one hand, it was justly felt that the state of the forces, and the countenance of the people in Ireland, were such as to leave no serious apprehension for the ultimate result of a landing; and, on the other, very sanguine, and certainly well-grounded expectations, were then entertained of destroying or intercepting their Naval Force. We appeal to every man whether these were not the first impressions on the Public Mind here, whether the Expedition was not considered as a rash, ill-concerted plan on the part of the Enemy; directed against the point where their hostile intentions were least likely to meet with success; to the point most within the reach of our Naval Power, and of every other succour and co-operation this Country could afford. Let every dispassionate man say whether these reflexions did not occur to him when first he heard the French were in Bantry Bay; whether he felt relieved or distressed on knowing, for a certainty, that they were on the Coast of Ireland; to what other friendly Coast, to what other part of the World under the British Dominion he could have wished them in preference to have steered. Their blow, it is true, was aimed at our greatest stake; but were the other objects, against which it might have been directed, of inconsiderable value or importance to this country, and were they equally prepared to resist or counteract an Expedition of this magnitude? It is impossible to revert to all the circumstances of our Naval and Military situation as they stood at that period, viewing them, first with respect to this Country and to Ireland; secondly with respect to our Trade and Foreign possessions; and, thirdly, with respect to the Defence and Preservation of Portugal, without agreeing that, during

ten days of anxiety and doubt in which we remained as to the real destination of the French Expedition, there was less reason to be alarmed for Ireland than for any other object, less danger to ourselves, and more for the Enemy, in an attempt upon that, than upon any other quarter.

Such were the first impressions upon the Public Mind, impressions just and reasonable, tending no less to confirm the propriety, than to support and assist the execution of the measures of internal defence taken by Parliament since the commencement of the Session. Whether the unfavorable alteration in opinion, which, to a certain degree, has since taken place in both Countries, is to be ascribed to the chagrin of disappointment, to the misrepresentations we have already noticed, or to any other cause, it must be admitted that some persons speak of the late Expedition in the language of acrimonious complaint, and others, from different motives, in a tone of alarm and despondency; for neither of which, in our opinion, any real grounds can be assigned.

It is sufficiently established, we trust, by the foregoing statement, that no real complaint or blame can attach on the conduct of any Department, Civil or Military, employed on this occasion; and, with respect to alarm or despondency, it is far easier to observe and describe the distressing effects of this epidemic disposition, than to trace the real causes by which it is created.

If the Enemy have compleatly failed in their first attempt at Invasion, and if all the loss, injury, and detriment, which have attended the Expedition, are on their side, what have we to apprehend from it's renewal? Will their Naval Force be superior to our own? Certainly not. Such a superiority cannot be attained, either by any exertions of their own, or by any assistance or co-operation they can derive from their Naval Allies, in the course of the present War. Will the sailing of their next Expedition remain longer concealed from our Fleet of Observation than the sailing of their last? Will it afterwards be more effectually screened and protected by
the

the elements against our pursuit? Will our communications be more interrupted and delayed, our operations more counteracted and frustrated by foggy and tempestuous weather than during the last attempt? We believe not. It is difficult for the most gloomy imagination to suppose that such a combination of untoward circumstances as we have described, all arising out of physical causes, all so connected in point of time and effect, will ever again occur. The hazy Weather which covered their departure would have been of no avail to their Safety, without the tempestuous Weather by which it was immediately succeeded, and both might have failed without the Interruption of all communication with Ireland. But let us, for argument's sake, suppose our obstinate and inveterate Enemy, recovered from the discouragement of their late attempt, following it up by another; and let us further suppose this second Expedition to reach our Coasts without interruption from our Squadrons, would all their difficulties be then overcome? Have we no means to prevent their landing, or to repel their attack? Have we no means of internal defence? Have we no means to retard their operations—to check their movements—to resist their progress until adequate reinforcements could be received? So far from being unprovided in these respects, or less provided than at the period of the last attempt, our Internal Forces are more than doubled, whilst all our other preparations have been increased, and our precautions multiplied in the same proportion. It is worthy of remark, that this augmentation of our Forces, these extraordinary preparations and precautions, were commented on with levity and ridicule, and represented as useless and vexatious, before the late attempt at Invasion, by those very persons, who are now most forward to anticipate a renewal of such designs; by those very persons who were then willing to rest our Defence on our Naval Exertions only, and who now assert, that no reliance whatever can be placed on our Naval Superiority. We leave to those persons to reconcile, as they can, such contradictory opinions; fortunately Ministers, and the Majority of Parliament, entertained different sentiments. They then reposited, as they still repose, a rational and well-founded confidence in our Naval Superiority, but they felt it their duty, when objects of such magnitude were at stake, to take, at the same time, effectual

effectual measures for Internal Defence, in concert with the protection of our Fleet.

From the judicious combination of these means, as they now exist, our security against Foreign Invasion is nearly as perfect as can be attained.

Exclusive of the Squadron appropriated to the North Seas, this security rests, by Sea, on more than *Fifty* Ships of the Line, with the means of augmenting the number, in proportion as the force of the Enemy or the exigencies of the Country may render necessary. By Land we may look for Security from at least 20,000 Cavalry, without reckoning any part of the Force collecting under the late Cavalry Act, to 100,000 Infantry, without reckoning more than one-third of the Supplementary Militia, or any of the numerous Volunteer Corps formed every day.—With these two last mentioned Resources, our Forces would not be less than 200,000 men; to which may be added, that the system at present established, aided by the zeal manifested in every part of the Country, would enable Government, in case of emergency, to call forth, almost immediately, any further Force that the hour of danger might require. If such be our situation, ought we to be dispirited by any menaces, or alarmed at any design of the Enemy? If they escape our Fleet in the first outset, will they not be in constant apprehension of it's overtaking them? Would not this apprehension lead to confusion, and prevent any operation of consequence on our Coasts? Should their troops have time to land, would they not be cut off from all communication and co-operation with their Fleet? And thus left without the possibility of receiving supplies or reinforcements from France, would they not soon be compelled to surrender to the Force which would pour down upon them from every quarter?

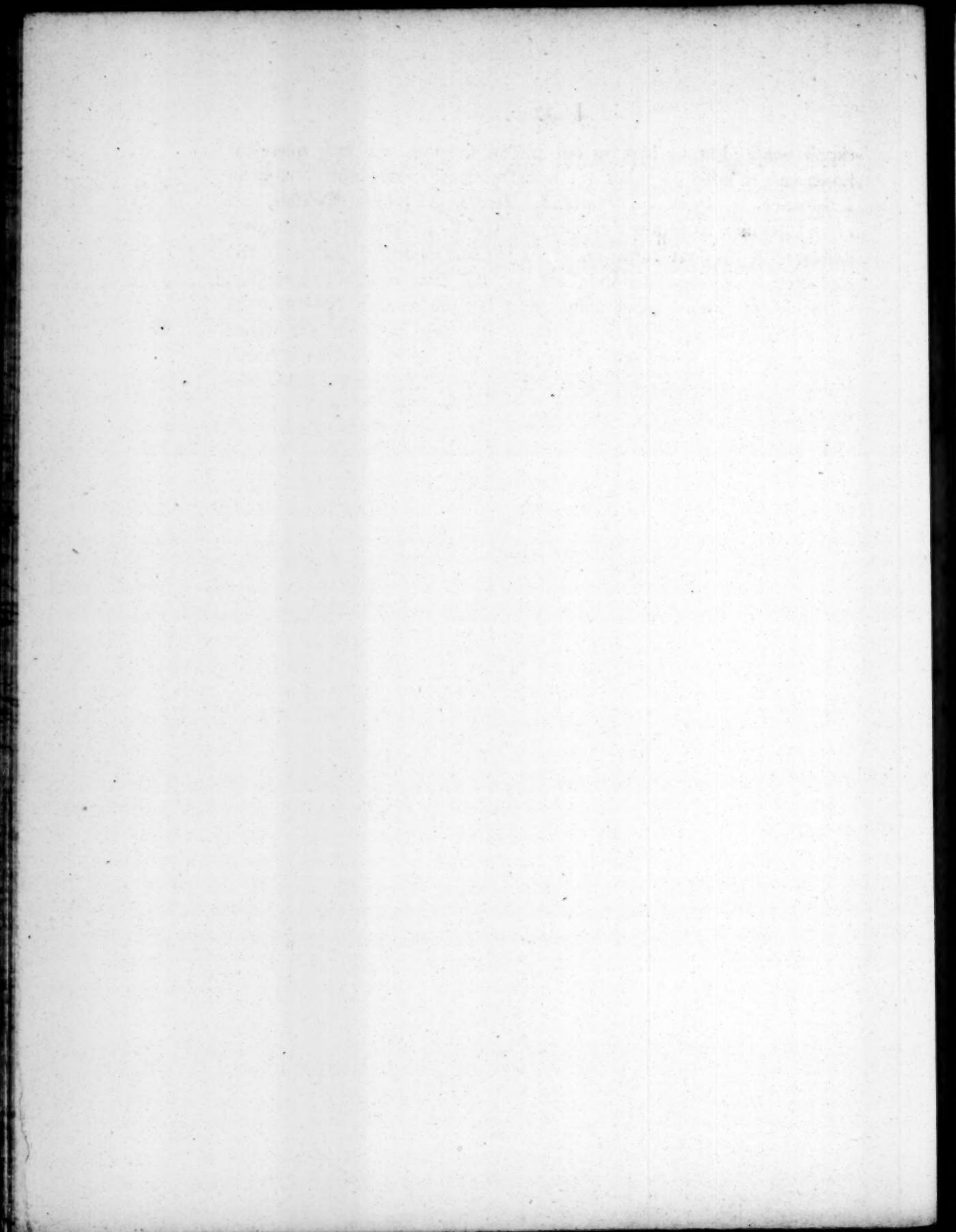
Upon all these grounds, instead of drawing any conclusion that the late events have proved our boasted Naval Superiority to be a delusion, which the Enemy may despise and defy with impunity, and on which we can no

longer rely with confidence, we have no hesitation in stating, that, if ever there was a wild, indigested and desperate Expedition set on foot, it was the late attempt on Ireland.—If ever there was an Expedition that proved the necessity of a superior Fleet to justify an invasion, it was the late attempt on Ireland.—If ever there was an Armament saved from destruction, without any merit of it's own, and merely by a concurrence of the most extraordinary circumstances, it was the late armament against Ireland.

We must therefore appeal to the Public against themselves, to their cool reflexion against their inconsiderate panic, to the genuine energy and honorable confidence of *all*, as manifested in the moment of real danger, against the pusillanimous conduct and shameful despondency of *many*, as betrayed on every false rumour, as created by every exaggerated alarm.

What encouragement can the Enemy have to persist in their plans of invasion? Is it the success of their first attempts on Ireland or Wales? Certainly not.—Is it the expectation of finding us unprepared, or of surprizing us in a state of supine unfounded Security? Certainly not.—In the origin of their designs it may have been an inducement, but at present they are better informed. Is it the prospect of ultimate Success? Impossible.—What other motive can they have, or rather to what greater object can they aspire, than the continuance of the calamitous effects, which false reports, groundless fears, ideal dangers, the comments of gloomy ignorance, and the efforts of disaffected malevolence have already produced? This is their object. *To destroy private and public Credit*; knowing that it's ruin would involve the ruin of our internal Industry, of our Foreign Commerce, and of our Colonial Power; knowing that these Sources of our Wealth once destroyed, our political importance would fall with our Prosperity; and that the loss of our Power in Europe would soon be followed by the loss of our Constitution, and of every thing dear to us at home. Let us not by our proceedings sanction such views. Let us dissipate the gloom, and with it will speedily disappear the Embarrassments on which the Enemy build their expectations.

expectations. Let us look to our present situation, not with querulous spleen, not to inflict an unjust and unconstitutional responsibility; but as to a Situation, in which our immediate interests, our present character, and every pretension to future Prosperity and Glory call upon us to meet great difficulties with great fortitude, to be just and moderate, but manly and consistent in our own demands, and to resist every monstrous pretension of the Enemy with a spirit, unshaken by late events, with a perseverance, not to be subdued by temporary pressure. It is only by union, and vigour among ourselves, by fidelity to our Allies, that, without disaster at home, without disgrace abroad, we may expect a speedy, safe, and honourable issue to the present War.



J U D G E M E N T

A P P E N D I X.

P A P E R S relative to the late Expedition of the
Enemy to the Coast of I R E L A N D.

S C H E D U L E.

No.	Dates.	Description of Papers.	Inclosures.
	1795.		
1.	October - 21st.	Order to Vice-Admiral Thompson.	
2.	— 25th.	Order to Vice-Admiral Colpoys.	
3.	December - 16th.	Mr. Nepean to Vice-Admiral Colpoys.	
4.	— —	Order to Captain Lane of the <i>Astrea</i> .	
5.	— 17th.	Captain Sir Edward Pellew to Mr. Nepean.	
6.	— 18th.	Vice-Admiral Colpoys to Mr. Nepean.	1.
7.	— 20th.	Mr. Nepean to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
8.	— 21st.	Admiral Lord Bridport to Mr. Nepean.	
9.	— 22d.	Order to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
10.	— 20th.	Captain Sir Edward Pellew to Mr. Nepean.	
11.	— 23d.	Admiral Lord Bridport to Mr. Nepean.	
12.	— 24th.	Order to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
13.	— —	Mr. Nepean to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
14.	— 25th.	Admiral Lord Bridport to Mr. Nepean.	1.
15.	— —	— - - Ditto - - Ditto.	
16.	— 26th.	Mr. Nepean to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
17.	— —	Admiral Sir Peter Parker to Mr. Nepean.	
18.	— 27th.	— - - Ditto - - Ditto.	1.
19.	— 28th.	— - - Ditto - - Ditto.	
20.	— —	Admiral Lord Bridport to Mr. Nepean.	
21.	— 29th.	— - - Disto - - Ditto.	
22.	— —	Vice-Admiral Kingsmill to Mr. Nepean.	3.
23.	— 31st.	Mr. Nepean to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
24.	— —	Mr. Nepean to Vice-Admiral Colpoys.	
25.	— —	Mr. Nepean to Admiral Sir Richard King.	
26.	— 23d.	Vice-Admiral Colpoys to Mr. Nepean.	
27.	— 24th.	— - - Ditto - - Ditto	1.
28.	— 31st.	Mr. Nepean to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
	1797.		
29.	January - 1st.	Order to Admiral Lord Bridport.	
30.	— —	Admiral Lord Bridport to Mr. Nepean.	
	1796.		
31.	December - 28th.	Vice-Admiral Colpoys to Mr. Nepean.	
32.	— 31st.	— - - - Ditto - - Ditto.	
	1797.		
33.	January - 2d.	Admiral Sir Richard King to Mr. Nepean.	
34.	— 3d.	Admiral Sir Peter Parker to Mr. Nepean.	
35.	— 4th.	— - - Ditto - - Ditto.	
36.	— —	Order to Captain Holloway of the <i>Duke</i> .	
37.	— 7th.	Admiral Sir Peter Parker to Mr. Nepean.	
38.	— —	State and Condition of His Majesty's Ships composing the Squadron under Vice-Admiral Colpoys, as re- ported previous to the Sailing of the several Ships.	
39.	— —	Ditto - - - Ditto — as reported upon the Re- turn of the several Ships into Port.	
40.	— —	Average Statement of Provisions at full Allowance on Board the Line of Battle Ships under the Com- mand of Vice-Admiral Colpoys, on their Return into Port.	
41.	— —	Extract of the Journal of Vice-Admiral Colpoys' Proceedings with the Squadron, between the 15th and 31st December 1796, inclusive.	

No. 1.

Extract of an ORDER from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Vice Admiral Thompson, dated the 21st October, 1796.

WHEREAS it is probable that the Enemy, in order to facilitate the Departure from the Port of Brest of the Transports and Storeships now fitting out there, may put to Sea with only a Part of their Ships of War, for the Purpose of drawing you away from the said Port, and by that Means enable the said Transports and Storeships to proceed to the Place of their Destination: And it being of the utmost Importance that every Attempt the Enemy may make for the Attainment of that Object should be frustrated; you are hereby required and directed, in Addition to former Orders, to keep as many of the Frigates under your Command as you shall judge necessary constantly cruizing as near to the Entrance of the Harbour of Brest as Circumstances will admit, directing their Captains to be particularly attentive in observing the Number and apparent State of the Ships of War, Transports, &c. in that Port, and to give you the earliest Information of any Alteration they may observe in them.

You are to cruize with the Squadron under your Command, in the best Situation which the State of the Wind and Weather will permit, for intercepting any of the Enemy's Ships which may attempt either to go into or come out of the Aarbour.

And, on the Sailing of any Squadron of the Enemy's Ships of War, you are to send a Cutter or Lugger to the nearest Port in England, with an Account to our Secretary of their Number, Direction of their Course, and the Ships you may have sent in Pursuit of them; but if the Enemy's Ships of the Line, Transports, &c. should sail together, you are, as soon as you can ascertain the Course they mean to steer, to send a Brig and Cutter or Lugger, with the Information thereof, to Vice Admiral Vandeput, or the Commanding Officer of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Lisbon, in case they should stand to the Southward, or to Vice Admiral Kingsmill at Cork, in the Event of their standing to the Northward; and in either Case you are to send an Account thereof to the nearest Port in England, for our Information, with Directions to the Officer charged with your Dispatches, to forward them to our Secretary with all possible Dispatch.

No. 2.

Copy of an ORDER from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Vice Admiral Colpoys; dated the 25th October 1796.

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

HAVING ordered Vice Admiral Thompson, commanding a Squadron of His Majesty's Ships employed upon a particular Service, to proceed to Gibraltar, and leave you in the Command of the said Squadron; you are hereby required and directed to hoist your Flag on Board the Niger Frigate, which has been ordered round to Cawsand-Bay from Spithead for the Purpose of receiving you on Board, and proceed in her to join the said Squadron agreeably to the inclosed Rendezvous; and upon joining it, shift your Flag on Board one of the Ships composing it, and taking upon you the Command thereof, carry into Execution the Orders which will be delivered to you by the Vice Admiral, for your Direction and Guidance.

Given under our Hands the 25th October 1796.

To

JOHN COLPOYS, Esq.
Vice Admiral of the Blue,
&c. &c.

SPENCER.
H. SEYMOUR.
W. YOUNG.

By Command of their Lordships,
Evan Nepean.

No. 3.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Vice Admiral Colpoys, dated the 16th December 1796.

SIR,

Admiralty-Office, 16th December 1796.

I Am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, that Admiral Lord Bridport will put to Sea in the Course of a few Days with Ten Sail of the Line, for the Purpose of relieving you upon your present Station, and such of His Majesty's Ships under your Command as have been longest at Sea; their Lordships having given Orders for those which may be now on their Return into Port to proceed and rejoin you, with a View of making up your Force to Seventeen Sail of the Line until the Arrival of Lord Bridport.

I am, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Vice Admiral COLPOYS, at Sea.

No. 4.

Copy of an ORDER from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Captain Lane, of His Majesty's Ship Astraea, dated the 16th December 1796.

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

YOU are hereby required and directed to proceed in the Ship you command with all possible Dispatch, and use your best Endeavours to join Vice-Admiral Colpoys upon his Rendezvous (a Copy of which you will receive

receive herewith;) and having so done, put yourself under his Command, and follow his Orders for your further Proceedings.

In case you should fall in with any of the Ships belonging to the Squadron under the Command of the said Vice Admiral returning into Port, you are to inform the Commanders that it is our Direction (if the State of their Ships will admit of it) they do forthwith return and rejoin the Vice Admiral on his Rendezvous.

Given under our Hands the 16th December 1796.

To

RICHARD LANE, Esq.
Captain of His Majesty's
Ship *Astraea*,
St. Helen's.

H. SEYMOUR,
J. GAMBIER.
W. YOUNG.

By Command of their Lordships,
Evan Nepean.

No. 5.

Copy of a LETTER from Captain Sir Edward Pellew, Bart. Commander of His Majesty's Ship *Indefatigable*, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 17th December 1796: Inclosing Copy of a Letter of the 15th December, and Extract of one of the 16th, written by that Officer to Vice Admiral Colpoys.

Indefatigable, at Sea, the 17th December 1796.

SIR,

THE inclosed Letters will relate my Operations since my last of the 11th, sent by the Amazon to Falmouth.

I have only now Time to say, that I attended the French Fleet, consisting in all of Forty-one or Forty-three Sail, round the Wth End of the Saints. At Eight o'Clock last Night they hauled close round, and appeared to

to steer about S. W. but it was very dark, so that their exact Course could not be obtained. I dispatched my Lugger to the Vice Admiral Yesterday Morning at Day-break. His Letters were put on Board the Marlborough by Eleven A. M. it only informed the Admiral, that a Report should follow by the Revolutionnaire at Night. At 4 P. M. I dispatched her to say the Fleet were out, and that I should attend them through the Passage du Raz, for which they were steering, and go through with them, and join the Admiral round the West End of the Saints in the Morning. They gave up that Intention, and kept close along the North Side of the Saints, and hauled close round it to the S. W. At Eight I made Sail for the Admiral's Rendezvous, but unfortunately have not yet been able to meet him. I spoke La Revolutionnaire at Nine this Morning; she had been equally unsuccessful.

The Van of the Enemy's Fleet consisted of Nine Sail of the Line, preceded by Six Frigates; the Rear I could not clearly distinguish, but there appeared to be Five or Six Sail of the Line among them. Both our Ships counted from 26 to 29 Ships of War, Two or Three large Storeships, and about Ten small Ships and Brigs.

As my Squadron are all seeking the Admiral upon his Rendezvous, it is my Intention, if I do find him before Night, to proceed with all possible Dispatch after the Enemy's Fleet to Cape Finisterre and Lisbon; but should I meet them before, I shall watch them in their Course, and be guided by Circumstances. I have not Time to give my Reasons at large for this Conduct; but should the Enemy go to Lisbon, it is of infinite Importance for that Court to be informed of their Approach.

I trust implicitly to their Lordships Candour for believing me actuated by every Motive of Honour and disinterested Zeal. I this Moment dispatch the Lugger to Falmouth, believing it also of as much Importance that their Lordships should know the French Fleet is out.

I have the Honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

ED. PELLEW.

Noon. Ushant, bearing N. E. by N. 26 Miles: Wind S. E. by S.
small Rain and hazy; double Reef Topsails, Gale.

Evan Nepean, Esq.

(A.)

(A.)

(Inclosed in No. 5.)

Copy of a LETTER of the 15th of December
1796, written by Captain Sir Edward Pellew,
Bart. to Vice Admiral Colpoys.

Indefatigable, in the Bay of Brest, 15th December 1796, P. M. 6.

SIR,

I HAVE the Honour to report to you, that I worked up near the Entrance of Brest this Day by Noon, and had the Opportunity of seeing the Fleet in Brest Harbour get under Weigh: The road of Bertheaume was possessed by One Ship of the Line and Five Frigates, which Ships have heretofore prevented me from seeing whether the Fleet had sailed from the Port or not, by getting under Sail and chasing me off. This Day they remained at Anchor, by which Means I can report to you, that from Eighteen to Twenty-two Ships got under Weigh and came out of the Port, and when they approached near to the Squadron lying in Bertheaume Bay, they also weighed by Signal, and chased me from Two o'Clock till Four almost abreast Ushant, when they hauled their Wind to the Southward. The Fleet was either under their Top-sails or laying too with their Heads to the Southward, and I conjecture might be as far down the Passage as Camaret, or perhaps between that and Bertheaume.

I shall be attentive to their Operations during the Night, and at Day-light I will dispatch the only Ship left me to your Squadron with any Information I may obtain. I have sent Captain Barlow with this, who will explain all other Circumstances.

I myself conjecture they must consist of Twelve or Sixteen Sail of the Line, but more Ships were weighing.

I have the Honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

Vice Admiral Colpoys.

E. PELLEW.

*I sent the Lugger
at 7 A. M. Decem-
ber 16th 1796.*

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(B.)

(Inclosed in No. 5.)

Extract of a LETTER from Captain Sir Edward Pellew to Vice Admiral Colpoys; dated on Board His Majesty's Ship Indefatigable, in the Bay of Brest, 16th December 1796, 3 P. M.

I HAVE now the Happiness to report to you after last Night's Alarm, that I have had once more a very clear View of the French Fleet, although at too great a Distance to be enabled to state to you correctly their Force; but the Number of Ships of War are from Twenty-six to Twenty-nine, among which I include One Line of Battle Ship and Five Frigates, which always anchor in Bertheaume Bay, and as usual have got under Weigh after me again this Day; the remaining Twenty or Twenty-three were at Anchor in the Bay of Camaret. The Flood was just made, and it appeared to me that about Four or Five large Ships were working up the Passage to Brest again; the others had Top-sail Yards hoisted, as if intending to weigh, but that I cannot answer for; they are however now at Anchor riding Flood, with Jibs up; whether they intended going to Sea, or came out to alarm us off, that a Convoy might come through the Bec du Raz, I know not; but I think a small Convoy did come through that Passage, as I observed Five or Six Brigs working up the Goulet, and a Gabarre and Gun Boat Chassé Marée came through that Passage as we were working up the Bay. I give you, Sir, the Ground upon which I have formed that Conjecture, and must leave it there.

I am made happy by seeing the Fleet where they are, as I believed they were off last Night for Portugal. It is possible that they may be alarmed by our having seen them Yesterday in their Operation of coming down; and suspecting that you, Sir, may be (as I hope you always will be) their Superior, they may probably think it prudent to wait a more favourable Opportunity.



This Note does not appear to have been Sir Edward Pellew's original Letter to V. Colpoys, but to have been added for further Information of the Admiralty.

The Moment this was signed the Fleet came out, so that the last Report was sent verbally by Captain Cole, as described in my Letter.

B

No. 6.

No. 6.

Extract of a LETTER from Vice Admiral Colpoys to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 18th of December, 1796; inclosing Copy of a Letter to him from Sir Edward Pellew, dated the 16th of December, 1796.

/// * I Herewith transmit you for their Lordships Information, Copy of Intelligence from Sir Edward Pellew of the Enemy's Movements on the 15th Instant; also his Letter of the 16th, which was taken out of the Lugger by one of my look-out Ships, and brought to me the same Evening, since which Time I have had no Tidings whatever of Sir Edward Pellew or the French Fleet; nor from the State of the Winds and Weather was it possible to have had any, for they have been as adverse to my Wishes as the Enemy could desire: All Yesterday exceedingly heavy, and blowing strong to the Eastward, and this Morning came round to the South West, and exceedingly thick; under these Circumstances, and the Possibility that their Lordships may be anxious to hear from the Fleet at any Rate, I have thought fit to send in the Constitution Cutter, and shall continue to use my best Endeavours to keep on my Rendezvous, and should I be blown from it by contrary Winds, I shall not if possible go higher up than the Lizard till I have further Directions from the Board.

If the Enemy are out and were bound to the Westward, I have the Consolation to think that they can have made but little Progress these last Thirty Hours, and now most certainly a retrograde Motion. If I can by any fortunate Event learn their Route, I shall not hesitate following them with a Part if not the Whole of my Force, but this must depend on the Nature of my Intelligence.

* See Inclosure (A)
in Sir Edwa Pellew's
Letter of 17 Decr
No. 5.

Inclosed

(Inclosed in No. 6.)

Copy of a LETTER to Vice Admiral Colpoys,
from Sir Edward Pellew; dated the 16th De-
cember, 1796.

SIR,

Indefatigable, 7 A. M. 16th December 1796.

I SEND the Lugger, only to say to you, according to my Promise, what should appear at Day-light. We have seen nothing of the Frigates since 11 last Night; they were then well up in the Bay; we followed as far as the Black Rocks. I am now turning up, and hope soon to be able to determine if the Fleet are gone to Sea, or had anchored in Bertheaume, and with that Report I will forward a Frigate to you. May I entreat the Lugger's Return, being at this Moment particularly useful.

I have the Honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

(Signed)

EDWD. PELLEW.

Vice Admiral Colpoys, &c.

No. 7.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the
Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport; dated
the 20th December, 1796.

My Lord,

Admiralty Office, 20th December, 1796.

MY Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received Intelligence
from Sir Edward Pellew that the French Fleet had put to Sea from
Brest on the 16th Instant, and had escaped the Squadron under the Orders

of Vice Admiral Colpoys, supposed to have been driven to the Westward ; I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you therewith, and to signify their Direction to you, to use every Means in your Power to get His Majesty's Ships under your Command put into a State of Readiness to proceed to Sea the Moment they shall be in a Condition for that Purpose.

I have the Honour, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Admiral Lord Bridport, K. B.
Portsmouth.

No. 8.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Lord Bridport to the Secretary of the Admiralty ; dated the 21st December, 1796.

S I R,

Royal George, Spithead, 21st December, 1796.

I HAVE received your Letter of the 20th Instant, communicating the Intelligence that the French Fleet had put to Sea from Brest on the 16th Instant, and had escaped the Squadron under the Orders of Vice Admiral Colpoys, supposed to be driven to the Westward ; I have in consequence given Directions to the Captains of the Squadron at Spithead under my Orders, to use every Exertion in getting their several Ships ready for sailing at the shortest Notice, and I trust I shall be able to go to Sea on Saturday or Sunday, should the Wind be favourable, as the Report from the Atlas informs me she cannot be ready before Friday next.—I am, &c.

BRIDPORT.

Evan Nepean, Esq.

No. 9.

No. 9.

Extract of an ORDER from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport, dated the 22d December 1796.

YOUR Lordship is hereby required and directed to put to Sea, without Loss of Time, with the Ships and Vessels named in the Margin; and proceed with all possible Dispatch down Channel, calling off Plymouth for the Raifonable (the Captain of which Ship is ordered to join you on your Appearance) and use your best Endeavours to join Vice Admiral Colpoys upon his Rendezvous, a Copy of which you will receive herewith; and upon falling in with the Vice Admiral, to take him, and the Ships and Vessels belonging to his Squadron, under your Command.

In case upon your Lordship's Arrival on Vice Admiral Colpoys's Rendezvous you should not fall in with the Vice Admiral, and have good Reason to believe that he has quitted his Station in Quest of the Enemy, you are to proceed with and make a Shew of your Force off Brest, remaining there such Time as your Lordship shall judge best for the above mentioned Purpose; and having so done, you are, in case you should not have been able to obtain any certain Intelligence of the French Fleet being in that Neighbourhood, to proceed with the Squadron under your Command off Cape Clear, sending a Frigate into such Port in Ireland as you shall judge most likely to gain Intelligence of the Enemy, and to use your best Endeavours to take or destroy them, should they be upon that Coast. But not obtaining any Information thereof which may be relied on, your Lordship is to return with the Ships and Vessels under your Command off Brest, and take such Station off that Port, for the Protection of the Trade of His Majesty's Subjects and the Annoyance of the Enemy, as you shall judge most eligible; sending to us, by every Opportunity, Accounts of your Proceedings, and the State and Condition of the Squadron under your Command.

No. 10.

Extract of a LETTER from Captain Sir Edward Pellew, Bart. Commander of His Majesty's Ship Ship Indefatigable, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 20th December 1796.

UNDER the Anxiety and Hurry in which I forwarded my last Letter to their Lordships, I omitted to mention that I intended to proceed to Cape Finisterre and Lisbon *only* in the Event of the Winds continuing at S. E. or fair for the Enemy's Fleet to proceed upon that Course. The Wind was S. E. by E. when I dispatched the Lugger, and before Night it was at South and S. S. W. with great Appearance of blowing Weather; this I concluded would not only interrupt the Progress of the Enemy's Fleet, but it was fairly to be presumed might oblige them to return either to some of the Southern Ports of the Bay, or run the Hazard of being driven very far to the Westward, and perhaps dispersed; I therefore, under these Impressions, believed it more for the Advantage of His Majesty's Service to continue my Endeavours to find the Vice Admiral. Allowing the French Fleet to have gone Five Knots until the Wind changed to South, I conjecture them to have made about 60 Leagues from the Saints, if they steered from S. W. to W. S. W. before the Wind changed.

The Reason upon which I found the Probability there is of Admiral Collpoys having had sufficient Information to induce him to go to the Southward and Westward after them, are, first, by Captain Barlow, who as well as myself was satisfied the Fleet intended to sail, if not then, in a Day or Two; and next by Captain Cole, who was in Possession of all I knew upon the Subject, and with whom I had made an Arrangement upon our Meeting, which, if he had not succeeded, would most likely have put him in my Way again. After this, the Inutility of my endeavouring to reach Lisboa with a S. W. Wind, and the Certainty of being able to start upon a fixed Data by returning to Falmouth, the Wind now blowing too hard at W. S. W. to keep our Ground, is self-evident.

No. 11.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Lord
Bridport to the Secretary of the Admiralty,
dated the 23d December 1796.

YOU will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I this Morning received their Lordships Order of the 22d Instant, for taking the Ships and Vessels named in the Margin, and proceed with all possible Dispatch down Channel, calling off Plymouth for the Raisonable and Unité, whose Captains you inform me have Orders to join me. In consequence of their Lordships Instructions, I hope all the Ships will be ready to sail on Sunday, as the Orion will be paid To-morrow; though the Report from the Prince George informs me, that she will not be ready before Sunday Night.

No. 12.

Extract of an ORDER from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord
Bridport, dated the 24th December 1796.

IN Addition to our Order to you of the 22d Instant, your Lordship is hereby required and directed, if the Raisonable should not be ready to join you when you appear off Plymouth, to proceed without her to Vice Admiral Colpoys's Rendezvous; and so soon as you shall have joined the Vice Admiral, and taken under your Command as many of the Ships of the Line of his Squadron as will complete that under your Lordship's Command to 17 Sail of the Line, you are to proceed off Cape Clear, as directed in our Order above-mentioned, without losing Time in endeavouring to shew your Force off Brest: And if you should not very soon fall in with the Vice Admiral, you are, without suffering any Delay by looking for him, to proceed off Cape Clear with the Ships now under your Command, and to act, as directed in that Case in our said Order.

If before your Arrival on Vice Admiral Colpoys's Rendezvous you should receive Information, on which you may depend, that the Enemy's Squadron

dron is on the Coast of Ireland, you are immediately to proceed in Quest of it, without proceeding to the Vice Admiral's Rendezvous.

In Addition to the Frigates now under your Lordship's Orders, you are hereby authorized to take under your Command any other Two Frigates you may meet with, which are not employed on any particular Service; and if you should meet with any of His Majesty's Ships near Brest, your Lordship is to direct the Captain of one of them to look into that Port, and having so done, to proceed to the nearest Port in England, and send to our Secretary such Information of the Force remaining there as he may have been able to obtain.

If you should receive certain Information of the Enemy's Squadron having returned into Port, or of its having gone to the Southward, so as to make it impossible that it should be destined for Ireland, you are to acquaint us therewith, and to cruize off Brest until you receive further Orders.

No. 13.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport, dated the 24th December 1796; inclosing Copies of Letters from Sir Edward Pellew to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 17th and 20th of December, and One from Vice Admiral Colpoys to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 18th of December, with Three Inclosures.

My Lord,

Admiralty Office, 24th December 1796.

Vide No. 5. // No. 6. 10. // 17 Dec^s 18th 20th

IN Addition to my Letter to your Lordship of the 20th Instant, communicating the Intelligence which had then been received from Captain Sir Edward Pellew, of His Majesty's Ship Indefatigable, relative to the Sailing of the Enemy's Fleet from Brest; I have now the Honour to inclose, by the Direction of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, Copies of Sir Edward's Letter and of its Inclosures upon that Subject, together with Extracts of subsequent Letters received from him and Vice Admiral Colpoys, for your Lordship's further and more particular Information.

I have the Honour, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Admiral Lord Bridport, K. B. Spithead.

No. 14.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Lord Bridport to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 25th December 1796; inclosing a Report made to his Lordship, by Captain Irwin, of the State of the Prince George.

I HAVE received your Letter of the 23d Instant, expressing their Lordships Directions to report, for their Information, the Occasion of the Delay in the Equipment of His Majesty's Ship Prince George.—Since that Ship has been under my Orders I have had Two Conversations with Captain Irwin, and pressed him very strongly to use every Exertion in getting ready for Sea; and by his personal Attentions at the Dock Yard in getting off her Stores for Foreign Service, she is now completed, as their Lordships will see by the inclosed Report: The Prince George's Weekly Account stated her not to be ready before Saturday Night; she was paid on Friday, and the Orion Yesterday, which made it impossible for me to move with the Ships under my Orders before the Time stated in my Letter to you of the 22d Instant; but, in consequence of Captain Irwin's Letter, which was received last Night, I made the Night Signal to unmoor, and I hope the whole Squadron will be passed St. Helens before the Close of the Day.

I have just received their Lordships additional Order of the 24th Instant.

(*Inclosed in No. 14.*)

Prince George, Spithead, December 24th, 1796.

S I R,

I BEG Leave to acquaint you, for the Information of my Lord Bridport, that His Majesty's Ship Prince George is in all Respects ready for Sea.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

JOHN IRWIN.

Rear Admiral Pole.

C

No. 15.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Lord Bridport to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 25th December 1796.

Royal George, at St. Helens, 25th Dec^r 1796. 7 P. M.
SIR,

I HAVE received your Letter of the 24th Instant, transmitting to me the Intelligence that had been received from Sir Edward Pellew, of the sailing of the French Fleet from Brest; also Copies of Sir Edward Pellew's Letter, and it's Inclosures upon that Subject, together with Extracts of subsequent Letters received from him and Vice Admiral Colpoys: And I wish these Documents could have given me the particular Destination of the Enemy's Fleet, but their Lordships may be assured that I shall pay proper Attention to them.

I acquaint you, for the Information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I made the Signal for the Squadron under my Command to weigh at 1 P. M. but in consequence of the Sans Pareil and Prince getting on Board of each other, the latter I find has received some Damages; but I am happy to see that Rear Admiral Lord Hugh Seymour has caused the Signal to be made that the Sans Pareil is ready to proceed. I am sorry also to add, that the Atlas is supposed to be on Shore on the Stourbridge Bank, but I have received no Report stating the Particulars of this Accident. These unfortunate and distressing Circumstances have occasioned the remaining Part of the Squadron that weighed with me to anchor at St. Helens, where I shall remain till they can join me unless I receive their Lordships Orders to the contrary; but I trust they will all be able to join me To-morrow Afternoon.

The Ships at St. Helens are named in the Margin.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

BRIDPORT.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

Roy^l George,
Roy^l Sovereign,
Namur,
Cæsar,
Mars,
Triumph,
Colossus,
Robust,
Irrefangible,
Phoenix,
Stag,
Triton,
Proserpine,
Megara,
Incendiary.

No. 16.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport, dated the 26th December 1796.

My Lord,

Admiralty Office, December 26th, 1796.

I HAVE received and communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Lordship's Letter of Yesterday's Date, acquainting me, for their Information, with your having proceeded to St. Helens with His Majesty's Ships therein mentioned, and with the Accidents that had happened to the Atlas and Prince; and I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their Direction to you to leave the Prince at Spithead, in case she should not be in a Condition to accompany you to Sea.

I have the Honour, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Admiral Lord Bridport, St. Helens.

No. 17.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Portsmouth and Spithead, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 26th December, 1796.

SIR,

Royal William, at Spithead, 26th December 1796.

In my Letter of Yesterday's Date I acquainted you, for their Lordships Information, that His Majesty's Ship Atlas got on Shore in attempting to work down to St. Helens; and inclosed the Particulars of the Damage sustained by the Prince, in consequence of running foul of the Sans Pareil.

I have now the Satisfaction to acquaint you the Atlas was got off without apparently receiving much Injury. A very hard Gale of Wind at East prevents all Communication with the Ships, and the Master Shipwright informs

me he cannot, for that Reason, send on Board the Prince the proper Persons to inspect her Defects, but they will go off the Moment the Weather will permit.

I am, &c.

P. PARKER.

P. S.—Inclosed is the State and Condition of the Harpy Sloop, which was driven from her Station by the Weather.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

No. 18.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Portsmouth and Spithead, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 27th December 1796; inclosing a Letter from the Master Shipwright of Portsmouth Dock Yard to him, respecting the State of the Prince.

S I R,

Royal William, Spithead, 27th December 1796.

PLEASE to acquaint their Lordships, that, owing to the Badness of the Weather, the West India Convoy could not possibly sail this Day from St. Helens; and that His Majesty's Ships, named in the Margin, were prevented by the same Cause from joining Admiral Lord Bridport at that Anchorage.

The Atlas has sustained no apparent Damage, and will proceed to Sea with the rest of the Squadron; but it appears by the Master Shipwright's Letter, which I inclose herewith, that the Officers of the Yard have not yet been able to determine the Damage the Prince has received.

I am, &c.

P. PARKER.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

(*Inclosed*

Prince George,
Sans Pareil,
Atlas,
Formidable,
Colossus,
Orion,
Thalia,
Triton.

(*Inclased in No. 18.*)

**Copy of a LETTER from the Master Shipwright
of Portsmouth Dock Yard, to Admiral Sir Peter
Parker, dated the 27th December 1796.**

S I R,

Portsmouth Dock, 27th December 1796.

I BEG Leave to acquaint you that we have this Day sent People on Board His Majesty's Ship Prince at Spithead; but there being such a heavy Sea, we cannot determine as to the Damage she has sustained; but find she makes no Water.

I am, Sir, &c.

EDWD TIPPET.

Sir Peter Parker, Bart. &c.

No. 19.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Portsmouth and Spithead, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 28th December 1796.

PLEASE to acquaint their Lordships, that His Majesty's Ship Eurydice arrived here Yesterday Evening, having been driven from her Station by strong Easterly Winds.

All the Ships at Spithead under the Command of Admiral Lord Bridport (except the Prince) attempted to work down to St. Helens, but only the Colussus and Thalia could reach that Anchorage.

No. 20.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Lord Bridport
to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the
28th December 1796.

SIR,

Royal George, St. Helen's,
28th December 1796.

SIR Peter Parker transmitted to me last Night a Message received by the Telegraph from their Lordships, for me to sail without waiting for the Prince; which I must certainly do, as I find by the Dock Yard Report of her Defects, that she must go into Dock to repair them.

I shall proceed to Sea the Moment the Remainder of my Squadron join me; but the Tides have been, and still are, very much against them.

I am, &c.

BRIDPORT.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

No. 21.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Lor Bridport
to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the
29th December 1796.

SIR,

Royal George, St. Helens,
29th December 1796.

YOU will be pleased to inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the Remainder of the Squadron under my Orders came from Spithead and joined me this Morning, except the Proserpine and the Incendiary Fireship, as I was obliged to send her up to get a new Bowsprit, which she carried away Yesterday by getting on Board of an Indiaman: And though I have gained the Ships, their Lordships will perceive I have lost the Wind, which blows now at S. S. W. but I shall embrace the first favourable Moment for proceeding to Sea.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

(Signed)

BRIDPORT.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

No. 22.

Extract of a LETTER from Vice Admiral Kingsmill to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 29th December 1796; inclosing a Copy and Extract of Two Letters received by him from Lieutenant Pulling, dated the 25th of December, and also one from General Dalrymple, dated the 28th.

BY Post on the 28th, I wrote you that Lieutenant Pulling was just returned (overland) but did not bring any other Accounts of the Enemy's Ships, the Weather having continued so extremely bad, thick, rainy, and blowing hard, that they had scarce been visible since his last Letter, and it had been impossible for them to attempt landing Troops, or indeed doing any Thing.—That a French Lieutenant, with Seven Men of his Men belonging to One of the Frigates, had been taken Prisoners, and the Officer carried to Dublin by One of General Dalrymple's Aids de Camp, who learnt from him that Moreau de Galles is the Chief Sea Officer, and General Hoche Chief of the Troops in this Expedition—That their Fleet consists of 17 Sail of the Line, 17 Frigates, the rest Transports, &c. to the Number of near 50 Sail; but the Frenchman was cautious, and pleaded Ignorance when Inquiries were made tending to gain particular Information. And I added, that as there was no Person at Bantry Bay sufficiently skilled in Sea Affairs to give regular Accounts, such as might be relied on, of the Enemy's Movements, I had ordered Lieut. Gerald Gibbons of the Cove Rendezvous, a steady, active, good Officer, well acquainted with the Country and its Language, to go thither, and remain on that Service till further Order.

Having Reason to apprehend that neither the Kangaroo nor any of the Packets have been able to reach England with those Advices, and the Weather having moderated, and Wind came to the South West, making it probable that this Letter may yet sooner be with you than any of my other Letters, I again dispatch Lieutenant Talbot in the Bush Cutter for Bristol. He is an intelligent young Man, and being acquainted with every Particular of the Subjects herein treated of, can satisfy any Enquiries.

I have

I have now the Satisfaction to conclude with transmitting you the best Account just received from General Dalrymple of the Enemy's having quitted Bantry Bay: And I concur in Opinion that they could not get wholly clear of the Land—judging from the Weather we had here, and the Situation they were left in by Lieutenant Pulling.

(A.)

(Inclosed in No. 22.)

Copy of a LETTER from Lieutenant Pulling to Vice Admiral Kingsmill; dated the 25th December 1796.

Mr. White's House, Seafield Park, Bantry Bay,
Christmas Morning, 1796, $\frac{1}{2}$ past Four.

SIR,

BEING off Castle Haven Friday Evening, and finding the Collector of the Customs, to whom all Intelligence is sent from the different Ports, resided at Skibreen, I judged best to go there. I saw several Letters sent to the Collector and other Gentlemen, all asserting a Fleet of French Ships to be beating up Bantry Bay, but assigning no one Reason by which I could determine them to be the Enemy. Several Expresses arrived during the Night, all to the same Purpose: I therefore took Horse in the Morning, and came here about Three in the Afternoon, when I found the Fleet to consist of Sixteen Sail, Twelve Ships, Two Brigs, and Two Luggers. Their being at the Distance of at least Eight Leagues prevented my being able to ascertain, with any Degree of Certainty, their Force. They are certainly large Ships, and some of them Men of War; but to say more at present would be only Conjecture.

I watched them till Dark, when they were working up towards Bantry, Two with Top Gallant Sails, but neither with a Main-sail set. The Country is very much alarmed; and if the Reports of Mr. Baylie, the Surveyor of Beerhaven, and those of many others, did not carry so much Timidity with them, without assigning positive Reasons for their Conjectures, I certainly should not hesitate in saying they are the Enemy.

It is my Intention, as soon as it is Day, to go as near them as Prudence will allow me, and endeavour to form a positive Opinion of my own; when that

that is attained, I shall immediately send you an Account of my Observations; though I judge, ere this reaches you, some certain Account will be sent by Sea. I sent the Winder Cutter Yesterday to Beerhaven and Crookhaven for Intelligence, and to proceed with what she may attain directly to you.

I enclose this in an Express sent by Captain Cotter, the Commissary, to General Dalrymple.

I have the Honor to be, &c.

(Signed)

GEO. C. PULLING.

Vice Admiral Kingsmill.

(B.)

(*Inclosed in No. 22.*)

Extract of a LETTER from Lieutenant George
Pulling to Vice Admiral Kingsmill, dated near
Bantry Bay, the 25th December 1796.

I AM this Instant returned from having had as good a View as it was possible on this Side the Bay, of the Fleet that are now at Anchor off Beerhaven Island, and nearer that Side than this.—They consist of Seventeen Sail, Eight of which are Two-decked Ships, Two Frigates, Two Brigs, and Two Luggers, the other Three are large Ships, but being end on, and farther distant than the rest, I could not see them distinct enough to ascertain their Force—I did not observe either Flag or Pendant flying at any One of their Mast Heads, and the Three Ships I had the best View of, *I'm certain were not English built.*

The Wind blowing very hard from the E. S. E. prevented my going in a Boat towards them, as I had intended this Morning.—But I hope the Account I have been able to transmit to you, will be sufficient Intelligence to confirm your Opinion what Squadron it is.

They came to an Anchor between Five and Six last Evening; and from the present Appearance of the Weather they cannot get higher up this Night, should they want to do it.

D

(C.) *Inclosed*

(C.)

(Inclosed in No. 22.)

Copy of a LETTER from General Dalrymple
to Vice Admiral Kingsmill, dated the 28th
December 1796.

Dear Sir,

Bantry, 28th December 1796.

WE have a Variety of Authorities for assuring you that, according to Reports brought in from many loyal Persons in the County, the Enemy's Fleet sailed in Two Divisions Yesterday; Four at Twelve, and Twelve at High Water, about Three.—The Wind blowing very strong at S. S. E. the Pilots here are of Opinion they could not weather the Durseys:—There are Reports current of Two being lost, but I cannot vouch for the Truth of this.—I have sent an Express to Admiral Elphinstone at Crookhaven.

They are so much dispersed, that he may probably put to Sea with his small Squadron in Search of Stragglers.—They had not One Three Decker in their whole Fleet.—I beg you will excuse the Shortness of this Letter; and believe me, &c.

W. DALRYMPLE.

Vice Admiral Kingsmill—Cove.

No. 23.

No. 23.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport, dated the 31st December 1796; inclosing Extract of a Letter and of its Inclosures from Vice Admiral Kingsmill, of the 29th of December.

My Lord,

Admiralty Office, 31st December 1796.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to acquaint your Lordship, that Dispatches have been received from Vice Admiral Kingsmill, dated Cork, the 29th of this Month, giving an Account of the Arrival of the French Fleet on the Coast of Ireland, which had anchored in Bantry Bay on the 24th, and had sailed from thence on the 27th, and had not afterwards been seen, nor had any Intelligence been received of its particular Point of Destination. The Force which had anchored in the Bay consisted of 17 Sail; the Particulars of which, and of the Fleet as it sailed from Brest, are described in the inclosed Papers.

Their Lordships are desirous that you should be apprized of this Intelligence with all possible Dispatch; I therefore send it by a Special Messenger, and I have their Lordships Commands to signify their direction to you to put to Sea without a Moment's Delay, and proceed in Quest of the said Fleet, according to the best Intelligence you may be able to obtain, and use your utmost Endeavours to fall in with and intercept it.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Admiral Lord Bridport—St. Helens.

No. 24.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Vice Admiral Colpoys, dated the 31st December 1796.

SIR,

Admiralty Office, 31st December 1796.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, that Dispatches have been received from Vice Admiral Kingsmill, dated Cork, the 29th of this Month, giving an Account of the Arrival of the French Fleet on the Coast of Ireland, which had anchored in Bantry Bay on the 24th, and had sailed from thence on the 27th, and had not afterwards been seen; nor had any Intelligence been received of the particular Point of its Destination.

The Force which had anchored in the Bay consisted of 17 Sail; the Particulars of which, and of the Fleet as it sailed from Brest, are described in the inclosed Papers.

Their Lordships are desirous that you should be apprized of this Intelligence with all possible Dispatch; I therefore forward it by a Special Messenger to Plymouth, to be conveyed to you from thence, in Duplicate, by Cutters which will proceed in Quest of you off the Lizard and upon your Rendezvous: And I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their Direction to you, to use your best Endeavours to fall in with and intercept the said Fleet of the Enemy.

I am, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Admiral Colpoys—at Sea.

No. 23.

No. 25.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Admiral Sir Richard King, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Plymouth, dated the 31st December 1796.

SIR,

Admiralty Office, 31 December 1796.

I HAVE it in Command from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to signify their Direction to you to send a Cutter with the inclosed Pacquet, addressed to Vice Admiral Colpoys, with Directions to her Commander to cruize for the Vice Admiral off the Lizard, unless from any Intelligence you may have received you shall have good Reason to believe that he has already gone up Channel.

I am, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) EVAN NEPEAN.

Admiral Sir Richard King, Bart.—Plymouth.

No. 26.

Copy of a LETTER from Vice Admiral Colpoys to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 23d December 1796; inclosing Copies of Two Letters he had received from Captain Sir Edward Pellew, dated the 15th and 16th of December 1796.

SIR,

London, at Sea, 23d December 1796.

BY the Constitution Cutter I acquainted you, for the Information of my Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty, of the very awkward Predicament I was in for Want of Intelligence relative to the Enemy's Motions, and which, from the Badness of the Weather, it has been impossible for me to obtain. Under these Circumstances, the only Measure left for me, was to endeavour to preserve my Station off Brest, in Hopes and Expectation of

of some favourable Event which might clear up my Doubts. From the Nature of the Weather we had from Saturday Evening the 17th Instant, I thought it more than probable that if the Enemy were out, some Dispersion might take place among them, and that by being off Brest I might be fortunate enough to fall in with some of them on their return: in which Respect I seemed at length to have had a Completion of my Wishes, as on the Morning of the 20th at 9 A. M. the Aquilon, One of my look-out Frigates, made the Signal for Six Sail to the Westward, and which we immediately after, on the Weather clearing up, got sight of, and plainly perceived they were steering for Ushant; and as soon as they descried us they hauled their Wind to the Westward: I then made the Signal for the advanced Squadron, consisting of the Impetueux, Minotaur, Bellerophon, and Marlborough, to chace, with the Phœbe, Aquilon, and Sylph Sloop. But from the Badness of the Weather, I must own I was not very sanguine in my Hopes of Success, as the Enemy were considerably to Windward of us; and had it continued One Hour longer dark and hazy, as it had been for Two Days before and Two Days since, I think they must have been in the middle of the Fleet, and which was so disposed of, that I hardly see how it would have been possible for any of them to have escaped. The Marlborough, soon after the Chace commenced, made the Signal that the Ships seen were Enemies of the Line and Frigates. I directed her, with the Ships before-mentioned, to continue the Chace, and returned with the rest of my Squadron to my Rendezvous, where we all met again the 22d, the Sylph Sloop excepted; and in Addition to the Enemy's Ships having escaped, I had the Mortification to find that the Minotaur and Bellerophon had each lost a Top-mast. Whilst laying too, to enable them to get others up, I was joined by the Revolutionnaire, with the accompanying Dispatches from Sir Edward Pellew,* which leaves me as much in the dark as ever how to proceed. I am making all necessary Disposition to enable the Squadron to proceed to the Southward, should I find myself authorized to do so from any future Intelligence. Many of the Ships are so very short of some essential Articles, that it would not be safe to risk a Separation, without a Supply.

* Copies inclosed
in Sir E. Pellew's
Letter to Mr. Ne-
pean of the 17th
December, vide
N^o 5.

I have just crossed on the Anson, which enables me to transmit this by her to their Lordships. The Weather coming on so exceedingly bad, obliges me to close this, and prevents me from entering into further Particulars relative to the Squadron.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient humble Servant,
(Signed) JOHN COLPOYS.

Eyan Nepean, Esq;

No. 27.

Copy of a LETTER from Vice Admiral Colpoys to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 24th December 1796; inclosing Copy of Intelligence received by him from the Honourable Captain Stopford, of the Phaeton, dated the 23d December 1796.

SIR,

London, at Sea, 24th December 1796.

I Mentioned in my Letter of Yesterday, that the Wind having shifted so suddenly to the North East, and coming on to blow very hard, that I was obliged to send Captain Durham away with my Dispatches in an unfinished State.

This Morning I found the Ships of my Squadron very much dispersed, and it has taken the greatest Part of the Day to collect them; and the Impetueux is still missing.

The Phaeton has just joined, and brought me the accompanying Intelligence, with which I have dispatched the Revolutionnaire to Lisbon, and shall send this in by the Phaeton, who is exceedingly short of every Thing; and the Weather is such as to put it out of my Power to make a more equal Distribution of Stores and Provisions to different Ships of the Squadron. I therefore mean, if possible, to recover my Station, in hopes of falling in with some more Ships.

The Powerful is exceedingly short of Water, and the Bolts of the Standard of the Head drawn, so that I shall be obliged to order her to return into Port the first favourable Moment; and whenever the Wind shifts to the Westward, I mean to follow with the rest of the Squadron.

I am, &c.

JNO COLPOYS.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

(*Inclosed*)

(Inclosed in No. 27.)

Copy of INTELLIGENCE received from the Honourable Captain Stopford, of His Majesty's Ship Phaeton, dated at Sea, the 23d December 1796.

THE French Fleet sailed the 16th Instant, consisting of Eighteen Sail of the Line, (all Two-decked Ships) Thirteen Frigates, Four Brigs, Three Cutters, and Three Lugger; said to have had Thirty Thousand Troops on Board. A 74-Gun Ship was lost going through the Bec du Raz, and about One Thousand Men drowned—She had on Board Eighteen Hundred Men.

JN^o COLPOYS.

London, at Sea, 24th December 1796.

No. 28.

Copy of a LETTER from the Secretary of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport, dated the 31st December 1796; inclosing Copies of Two Letters from Vice Admiral Colpoys, dated the 23d and 24th of the same Month, and of a Paper referred to in the last mentioned Letter.

My Lord,

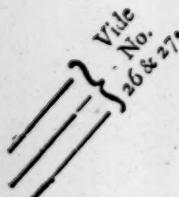
Admiralty Office, 31st December 1796.

IN Addition to my Letter of this Day's Date, I have it in Command, from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to transmit to your Lordship, for your Information, Copies of Two Letters, dated the 23d and 24th Instant, and of a Paper referred to in the latter, which have been this Day received from Vice Admiral Colpoys.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

EVAN NEPEAN.

Vide
No.
26 & 27.



Admiral Lord Bridport, K. B.—St. Helens.

No. 29.

Extract of an ORDER from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Admiral Lord Bridport, dated the 1st January 1797.

WHEREAS Information has been received of the Arrival at Spithead of the Squadron under the Command of Vice Admiral Colpoys; and judging it expedient that the Squadron under your Lordship's Command should be reinforced, and having in consequence ordered Sir Peter Parker to cause the Stores, Provisions and Water of the Ships, named in the Margin, to be completed without a Moment's Delay (either from the Ships not under Orders for Sea, or from His Majesty's Stores on Shore, which ever can most shortly be done) intending that they shall compose a Part of the Squadron under your Command; your Lordship is hereby required and directed to take the said Ships under your Command accordingly; and having so done, you are to put to Sea with them, and such other Ships of your Squadron as may be ready, and carry into Execution the Orders you have already received, the Moment the Wind and Weather will permit, without waiting for the Completion of the full Proportion of Stores and Water on Board the said Ships, provided they shall, in other Respects, be in a fit Condition to accompany you.

If, from any Intelligence your Lordship may receive, you shall find that the French Squadron shall have left the Coast of Ireland, you are in such Case to proceed off Brest, for the Purpose of intercepting any of the Enemy's Ships of War or Transports belonging to it, or any other of the Enemy's Ships or Vessels which may attempt to enter that or any other of their Ports in that Neighbourhood.

And whereas we have directed the Captain of His Majesty's Ship Ville de Paris to put himself under your Lordship's Orders; you are hereby further required and directed to take him and the said Ship under your Command accordingly; but if, from the State of her Crew, or from any other Circumstance, she should not be ready to accompany you at the Time of your Sailing, you are not to wait a Moment for her, but to direct her Commander to remain at Spithead for further Orders, using every Dispatch in his Power in getting the Ship ready for Sea.

No. 30.

Copy of a LETTER from Admiral Lord Bridport to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 1st January 1797.

Royal George, St. Helens, 1st January, 1797.

SIR,

I THIS Morning received your Two Letters of the 31st Ult^o. stating the Situation of the French Fleet, and Directions to proceed to Sea with the Squadron under my Command; that Sir Peter Parker had been directed to put any of the Frigates at Spithead under my Orders, and to furnish me with Pilots for the Irish Coast; also accompanying Pacquets, containing a Copy of Letters of the 23d and 24th of December, from Vice Admiral Colpoys, with Intelligence from the Honourable Captain Stopford therein referred to, together with an Extract from Vice Admiral Kingsmill and General Dalrymple's Letters, and Intelligence of the 28th and 29th of last Month.

Their Lordships may be assured that I shall lose no Time in putting to Sea the Moment the Wind is favourable, with the Ships and Vessels which have hitherto been put under my Orders.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

BRIDPORT.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

No. 31:

No. 31.

Copy of a LETTER from Vice Admiral Colpoys to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 28th December 1796.

S I R,

London, at Sea, 28th December 1796.

IN my last Letter of the 24th Instant, by His Majesty's Ship Phaeton, I acquainted you, for the Information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, my then Situation with respect to the Squadron under my Command: Since which Time we have experienced constant Gales of Wind, and which have hung so far to the Southward, and with so great a Swell, as not to enable me to weather Scilly, or else I should have proceeded up Channel, at least as far as the Lizard.

I mentioned in my former Letter the Powerful's Situation with regard to the Standard of her Head, and her Shortness of Water; in the Course of the Gale on the 25th Instant she made the Signal of not being able to keep Company; I therefore conclude she must be gone for Ireland.— Monday; the Weather still continuing so bad as not to enable me to supply the Wants of the particular Ships, I therefore hailed the St. Fiorenzo, and directed her Captain to proceed to the nearest Port, she being in Want of Water and Fuel.

I also acquainted you that the Impetueux had parted from me in the Gale of the 23d Instant; she joined me Yesterday.

The Swiftsure carried away her Top-mast last Monday Night, the 26th, and we have not seen her since Tuesday Afternoon.

The Defiance sprung a Main Top-mast on Wednesday Evening, the 28th Instant.

The very first favourable Moment I shall proceed as high up as the Lizard, in Hopes of receiving their Lordships Orders for my further Proceedings.

I forward this by the Sylph, she being much in Want, and the Weather being such as to prevent any of the Ships from supplying her; and if it still continues as bad as at present, I shall be under the Necessity of allowing the Aquilon to proceed into Port on the same Account.

I am sorry I have not some more pleasing Occurrences to communicate to you for the Information of their Lordships.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

JN^o COLPOYS.

Evan Nepean, Esq;

No. 32.

Extract of a LETTER from Vice Admiral Colpoys to the Secretary of the Admiralty; dated London, at Spithead, the 31st December, 1796.

London,
Duke,
Glory,
Impetueux,
Marlborough,
Majestic.

I REQUEST you will inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I arrived here with His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin; the others having separated from me in the Course of the very bad Weather we have experienced for some Days past.

No. 33.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Richard King, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Plymouth, to the Secretary of the Admiralty; dated the 2d January 1797.

AT Half past Ten o'Clock this Morning I received their Lordships Dispatches by a Messenger for Vice Admiral Colpoys, and shall send a Cutter with them for the Chance of falling in with the Vice Admiral off the Lizard; although, from the Information I received last Night from Captain Durham, of the Anson, I have Reason to believe the Vice Admiral has passed up Channel.

I shall also send a Vessel to look out for the Vice Admiral agreeably to the Rendezvous, if I do not receive certain Information of his having gone up Channel in the Course of this Day.

No. 34.

No. 34.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Portsmouth and Spithead, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 3d January 1797.

PLEASE to acquaint their Lordships, that the Fleet under the Command of Admiral Lord Bridport, at St. Helens, got under Weigh at Day-light this Morning, and that many of the Ships are now out of Sight, with a fine Breeze at S. E. The Romney is getting under Weigh, and the Majestic will I hope soon do the same. Every Exertion shall be made to enable the Three Ships named in the Margin to follow his Lordship as soon as possible.

The York and Eurus are under Sail with the West India Convoy.

No. 35.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Portsmouth and Spithead, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 4th January 1797.

TH E Ships* named on the other Side sailed this Day for the Destinations expressed against them.

* Majestic,
Unité, } to join Admiral Lord Bridport.
Incendiary,

No. 36.

Copy of an ORDER from the Lords of the Admiralty to Captain Holloway, of His Majesty's Ship the Duke, dated the 4th January 1797.

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

Ville de Paris,
Majestic.

YOU are hereby required and directed to take His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin under your Command (their Captains being directed to follow your Orders) and putting to Sea without a Moment's Loss of Time with them and the Ship you command, together with the Unité and Incendiary, if those Ships should be ready, and proceed down Channel, calling off Plymouth for the Raisonable or Edgar (the First of them if ready, if not the latter) leaving the other at Plymouth; and having also taken such Ship under your Command repair with all possible Dispatch to, and use your best Endeavours to join the Rt. Hon^{ble} Admiral Lord Bridport, K. B. upon his Rendezvous, Copies of which are herewith sent to you. And upon joining his Lordship, deliver to him the inclosed Pacquet bearing his Address, and follow his Orders for your further Proceedings; directing the Commanders of the Ships which may have accompanied you to do the like.

* (Note)
The Raisonable joined the Duke off Plymouth on the 9th Jan. with the Scourge Sloop.

In Case, on your Arrival off Plymouth, neither the Raisonable * nor Edgar should be in a proper Condition to accompany you, you are to take any other Line of Battle Ship which you may find there in a proper State so to do, leaving the Two others above-mentioned at that Port for further Orders. Given under our Hands the 4th January, 1797.

PH. STEPHENS.

J. GAMBIER.

W. YOUNG.

To

JOHN HOLLOWAY, Esq;
Captain of His Majesty's
Ship the Duke,
Spithead.

By Command of their Lordships,

Evan Nepean.

No. 37.

Extract of a LETTER from Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Portsmouth and Spithead, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 7th January 1797.

PLEASE to acquaint their Lordships, that His Majesty's Ships named in the Margin, sailed this Day to join Admiral Lord Bridport, K. B.

10 FE 58

102

10 Feb 58

An ACCOUNT, shewing the STATE and CONDITION of His Majesty's
previous to their

SHIPS NAMES.	When failed.	PROVISIONS on Board the several S									
		DAYS.			WEEKS.						
		Bread.	Beer.	Wine and Spirits.	Beef.	Pork.	Peaſe.	Oatmeal.	Flour.	Suet.	
Queen Charlotte	15th October 1796	105	7	89	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
London	- - -	100	8	112	16	16	15	15	16	16	16
Duke	- 28th	-	-	112	—	91	16	16	16	16	16
Glory	- 15th	-	-	97	11	84	15	15	16	8	15
Impetueux	- 28th November	115	2	89	8	16	16	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	4	1
Swiftsure	- 30th	-	-	112	18	114	16	16	16	16	16
Theseus	- 15th October	-	-	98	15	80	15	15	12	12	15
Defiance	- 29th	-	-	72	11	105	16	15	12	12	16
Bellerophon	- 16th	-	-	Complete for Six Months				—	—	—	—
Powerful	- 11th	-	-	160	—	161	24 24 24	24	24	12	1
Minotaur	- 6th November	-	-	112	8	112	Sixteen Weeks				—
Edgar	- 5th	-	-	70	—	80	Ten Weeks				—
Alexander	- 16th October	-	-	168	4	168	Twenty-four Weeks				—
Marlborough	- 6th September	-	-	70	—	56	10 10 10	10	10	10	1
Majestic	- 29th October	-	-	Complete for Four Months				—	—	—	—
St. Fiorenzo	- 24th	-	-	90	—	56	11 11 11	11	—	—	11
Stag	- 16th	-	-	32	15	29	6 6 4	4	4	4	4
Thalia	- 21st	-	-	105	1	112	16 16 16	16	16	10	—
Aquilon	- 21st	-	-	100	11	91	Complete for Sixteen Weeks				—
Indefatigable	- -	-	-	30	—	11	3 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ 6	6	6	6	6
Revolutionaire	- -	-	-	40	—	10	5 5 2	2	2	2	2
Amazon	- -	-	-	70	—	70	10 10 10	10	10	10	10
Phœbe	- -	-	-	56	—	25	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	—

o. 38.

Majesty's Ships under the Command of Vice Admiral Colpoys, as reported to their Sailing.

veral Ships at the Time of their Sailing.

Suet.	Fruit.	Butter.	Cheese.	Rice.	Sugar.	Oil.	Vinegar.	Tons of Water.
16	16	15	14	—	—	—	16	280
16	16	13	13	3	5	—	10	270
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	290
7	7	7	7	8	8	8	16	265
4	4	14	14	—	—	—	12	230
16	10	14	14	—	—	—	16	190
15	15	13	13	—	—	—	16	180
16	16	12	12	—	—	—	16	194
12	12	12	12	8	8	—	—	220
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	200
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	200
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	170
10	10	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	143 $\frac{1}{2}$
11	—	1	1	—	—	—	12	220
4	4	4	4	—	—	—	4	46
10	6	15	15	—	—	—	4	43
eks	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	53
6	1	4	4	—	—	—	15	76
2	2	1	1	—	—	—	4	40
10	10	8	8	—	—	—	5	36
1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	4	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	10	50
						8	70	70

} These Ships received on Board
a farther Proportion of Pro-
visions and Water, previously
to their Sailing.

66. 11. 5.

10 FE 58

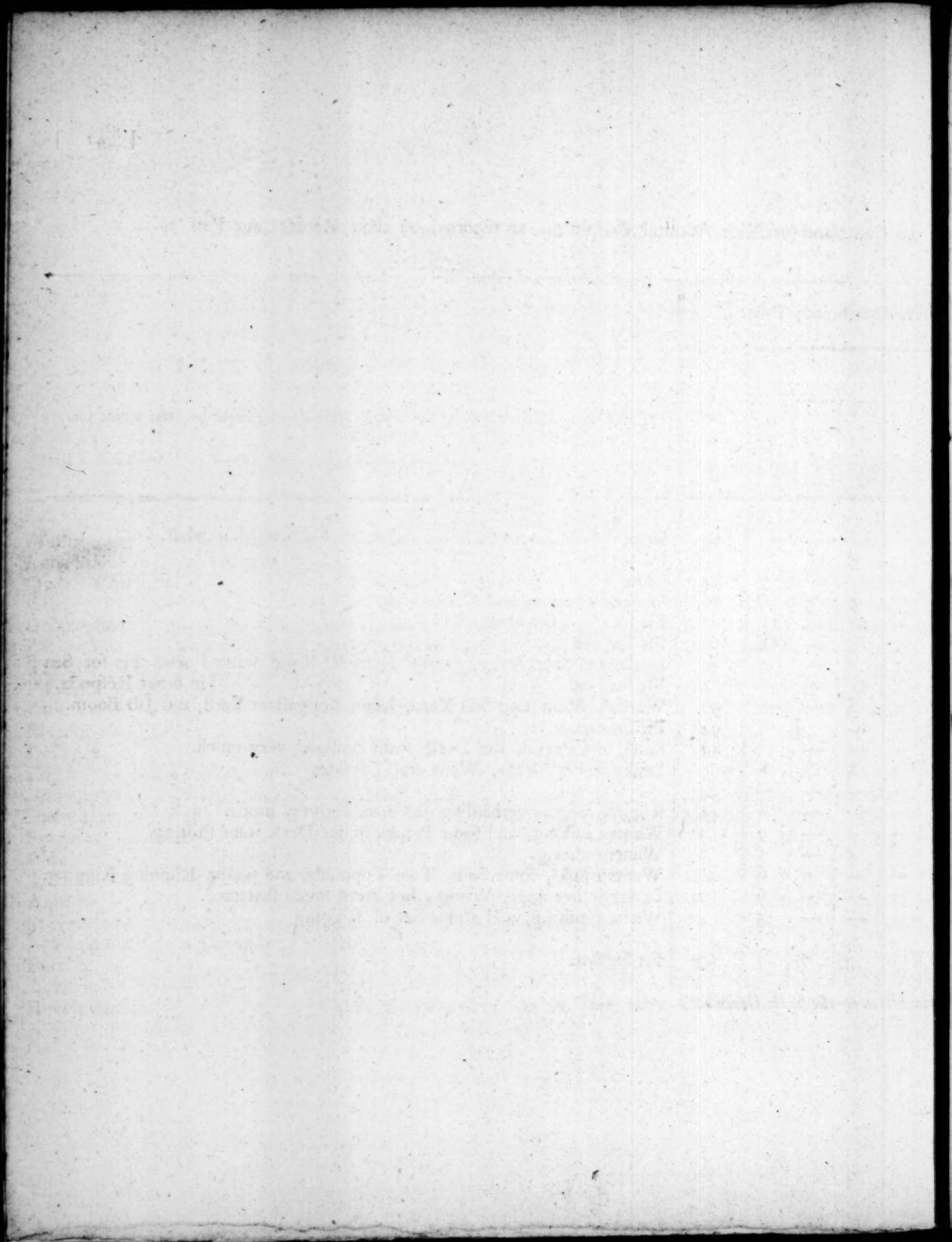
An ACCOUNT, shewing the STATE and CONDITION of His Majesty's Ships & the

the Command of Vice Admiral COLPOYS, as reported on their Return into Port.

their Return into Port.

Butter.	Rice.	Sugar.	Oil.	Vinegar.	Tons of Water.	
—	—	—	—	—	24	Requires caulking generally, and to have a new Main Mast.
—	3	5	—	5	67	Fit for Sea.
—	—	—	—	3	64	Do.
—	5	5	5	6	60	Wales, Topsides and Decks leaky.
—	10	10	2	12	20	Fit for Sea when caulked.
—	9	9	—	11	59	Fit for Sea.
—	2	1	—	4	30	Decks and Sides leaky, greatest P ^t of R ^t Rigg ^s wanted new: Fit for Sea [in other Respects.]
—	11	11	—	8	4	Fit for Sea.
—	2	2	—	8	90	Wanting Main Top Sail Yard, Main Topgallant Yard, and Jib Boom.
—	—	—	—	—	8	Fit for Sea.
—	8	8	8	8	83	Sides, and Part of the Decks want caulking very much.
—	—	—	—	—	95	Leaky in her Decks, Wales and Topsides.
—	—	—	—	—	54	Rigging wants overhauling and mending very much.
—	—	—	—	6	144	Wants caulking, and some Planks in her Deck want shifting.
—	—	—	—	9	110	Wants refitting.
—	2	1	—	1	7	Wants caulking, some Sails, Two Topmasts, and sundry Running Rigging.
—	—	—	2	6	40	Leaky in her upper Works; her Stern much shattered.
—	3	—	—	6	2	Wants caulking, and a new Set of Rigging.
—	—	—	—	5	4	
—	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	7	7	63	Fit for Sea.

(Arrived at Lisbon on the 24th December)



N°. 40.

An AVERAGE Statement of the PROVISIONS on Board the Line of Battle Ships under the Command of Vice Admiral Collpoys, on their Return into Port, at full Allowance.

Bread	44	Days.
Wine and Spirits	42	
Beef	6	Weeks.
Pork	7	
Pease	6	
Oatmeal	6	
Flour	6	
Suet	5½	
Fruit	5	
Butter	3	
Cheese	2¾	
Rice	3	
Sugar	3½	
Oil	1	
Water	34	— Days.

N^o. 41.

An Extract from the JOURNAL of Vice Admiral Colpoys, between the 15th and 31st of December 1796 (inclusive) relative to his Proceedings, with His Majesty's Squadron under his Command, between those Periods.

Week D	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Couries.	Dist.	Lat.	Long.	Bearings and Distances.	REMARKS, &c.
December 1796.					*			
	15	E.b.S. E.S.E. E.S.E.	S.E.E. N.E. S.W.	13 ^m .	48°: 09'. 5°: 39'. W.		Ushant N. 53°. 48'. E. Dist. 11 Leagues.	Moderate Breezes; at Noon ans ^d Aquilon; 1 Sail S.b.E.— $\frac{1}{4}$ past St. Fiorenzo made the Signal that the Chase was a Friend; at 2 made the general Signal that no Lights were to be shewn, $\frac{1}{4}$ after for distant Ships to close with the Admiral, A. M. $\frac{1}{4}$ past 7 made the Impetueux and St. Fiorenzo's Signals to look out S. S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ after 10 the Minotaur made the Signal that the Chase was a Friend; at 11 made the Bellerophon's Signal to repeat those made by distant Ships to the Admiral, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Sylph's Signal to look out East: Squadron in Company, except Thalia.
Friday	16	E.b.N. E.S.E. E.b.S.	E.b.E. N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. N.E. b.N.				Ushant S. 81 East. Dist. 15 Leagues.	P. M. Fresh Breezes and Cloudy W. at Noon made the Signal to come to the Wind on the Starboard Tack, at 2 that no Lights were to be shewn, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Bellerophon's Signal to repeat those made by distant Ships to the Admiral, at 3 the Minotaur made the Signal for 1 Sail N. b. E.; $\frac{1}{2}$ past made the Signal for distant Ships to close with the Admiral, at 8 made the general Signal to Wear.—A. M. at 4 a strange Cutter to Leeward, $\frac{1}{4}$ after 7 made the Sylph's Signal to look out East, $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Signal for Ships on the look-out to extend their Distance from the Admiral—answered Minotaur's Signal for 2 Sail East, at 9 the Phœbe made the Signal with a Gun that the Enemy at Brest was in Motion, 4 Minutes after made the Signal for distant Ships to

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dist.	Lat.	Long.	Bearings and Distances.	REMARKS, &c.
December 1796.								to close nearer the Admiral, and the general Signal for the Squadron to keep in close Order, $\frac{1}{4}$ after that the look-out Ships were at a proper Distance from the Admiral, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the general Signal to bring to—joined Company His Majesty's Ship Phœbe, and brought me Intelligence from Sir Edward Pellew of the Enemy's having come out from Brest, and chased him from 2 till 4 o'clock off Ushant, when they hove to; received by the Constitution Cutter Admiralty Letters of the 7th, 8th, and 10th Instant with the several Inclosures of Intelligence respecting the Enemy's Motions at Brest; $\frac{1}{2}$ after 10 made the general Signal to make Sail after lying by, at 11 the Signal to Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Aquilon's to look out E.N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ after the Impetueux Signal to Tack: Squadron in Company, except Thalia.
Saturday	17	Ditto.	S. E. b. E. S. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.					P. M. Fresh Breezes and Cloudy W ^r , $\frac{1}{2}$ past Noon made the Phæton, St. Fiorenzo, and Impetueux Signals to Tack, at 2 the Signal that no Lights were to be shewn, $\frac{1}{4}$ after the Signal to the Squadron to keep in more close Order, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Minotaur made the Signal that the Ships seen were Frigates, and going large with the Wind on the Starb ^d Quarter, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 made the Signal for the look-out Ships to close with the Admiral. $\frac{1}{4}$ after the Marlbro' made the Signal to speak with the Admiral, at 4 made the general Signal to Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Signal for the Squadron to keep in more close Order, at 5 the Signal to bring to; received by Capt ⁿ Nicholls a Letter from Sir Edw ^d Pellew informing me that he had not been able to gain any farther Intelligence of the Enemy's Motions—at 6 the general Signal to make sail after lying by—A. M. at 2 made the gen ^l Signal to Wear, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the St. Fiorenzo's Signal to look out S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 the general Signal
			S. E. b. S. E. b. N.				N. 87° 30' E. Dist. 15 Leags.	Ushant

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dist.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	REMARKS, &c.
December 1796.								Signal to Wear and come to the Wind on the Starboard Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 made the Constitution Cutter's Signal to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 repeated ditto, $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Signal to the look-out Ships to close nearer the Admiral, and repeated the Cutter's Signal to come within Hale: Squadron in Company, except Thalia and St. Fiorenzo.
Sunday	18	Variable.	S.E.b.S.	E.b.N.	34 ^m . 48°: 48". N.	5° 26". W.	Ushant a 44 East Distant 9 Leags	P. M. Fresh Gales and Hazy W ^r with Rain; $\frac{1}{2}$ past Noon made the Alexander's Signal to keep her Station and the Aquilon's to examine a Stranger, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 1 made the gen ^r Signal that the Admiral means to Tack at 8 o'Clock, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 the Signal that no Lights were to be shewn. A. M. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12 the general Signal to Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 Thick foggy Weather, the Marlbro' made the Signal for Soundings in 67 Fathoms. $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Constitution Cutter's Signal to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 repeated D ^r , $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 repeated Ditto, Thick foggy W ^r at 12 fired the Fogg Gun: Squadron in Company, except Thalia and St. Fiorenzo.
Monday	19	S.W.b.W	W.S.W.	N.W.b.W	12 ^m .	48°: 57".	5°: 43". W.	P. M. Thick foggy W ^r ; at 1 fired the Fog Gun, at 2 made the Fog Signal to Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ past the Constitution Cutter's Signal to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 sent Admiralty Dispatches on Board, and directed the Lieutenant to proceed with her to Falmouth or Plymouth, which ever he might judge most convenient—at 12 made the general Signal to Tack; A. M. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the general Signal to close round the Admiral, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Aquilon's to look out S. S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 made the Phaeton's Signal to come within Hale, at 9 the general Signal to Tack, and the Aquilon's to look out West, $\frac{1}{2}$ after answered Marlbro' Soundings in 62 Fathoms, $\frac{1}{2}$ past the general Signal to close, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Phaeton's to look out S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 answered

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dist.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	R E M A R K S , &c.
December 1796.								answered private Signal to the Phœbe, and directed her to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 the Sylph's Signal for that Purpose: Squadron in Company, except Thalia and St. Fiorenzo.
Tuesday 20th		N. W.	S. W.					P. M. Fresh Breezes and Hazy Weather; $\frac{1}{2}$ past Noon spoke the Phœbe, made the Sylph's Signal to look out W. N. W. answered Aquilon and Phœbe, 1 Sail N. N. W. and N. W. at 1 made the general Signal to Wear, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Phœbe's Signal to look out South, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 made the Signal to Wear after the Close of Day, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 to form the Order of Sailing, at 4 the Signal for distant Ships to close with the Admiral, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4 the general Signal to keep in more open Order, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the Aquilon's Signal to come within Hale—ordered her a-head during Night, and to carry a Light—A. M. Fresh Breezes and Hazy W'; $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the Phœbe's Signal to look out N. E. and the Sylph's to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{2}$ after 8 answered Aquilon 6 Sail W. N. W. made the Aquilon, Phœbe, Marlbro' and Sylph's Signals to chase W. N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ after answered Marlbro' that the Ships seen were going large with the Wind on the Starboard Quarter, $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Impetueux, Marlbro' and Bellerophon's Signals to chase, 5 Minutes after the general Signal to chase, 6 Minutes after 9 answered Marlbro' that the Ships seen were by the Wind on the Starboard Tack, 3 Minutes after that they were of the Line, $\frac{1}{2}$ after 9 answered Marlbro' that the Chase was an Enemy, and that they had made more Sail, $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Phœbe and Sylph's Signals to keep Sight of the Enemy and make their Motions known to the Admiral—Fresh Breezes and Hazy W'; $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 made the general Signal to chase and to make all Sail possible, 5 Minutes after the Edgar's Signal to chase W. N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 answered Marlbro's Signal for 2 Ships of
		N.W.bW	S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.					O

Week Day	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dist.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances	REMARKS, &c.
December 1796.								of the Line and 3 Frigates, and that they were Enemies, at 11 made the Impetueux, Minotaur, Marlboro', and Bellerophon's Signals to chase and rendezvous N° 6 Gen ^t , $\frac{1}{4}$ after made the Edgar and Powerful's Signals to take their Stations N. W. 2 or 3 Miles distant from the Admiral, and for the Squadron to shorten Sail and Reef Topsails—Fresh Breezes and Hazy W ^r ; repeated the Edgar's Signal as above, Twice—Squadron in Company, except Thalia and St. Fiorenzo.
Wednesday	21	N.W.b.N	W. b. S.	18 ^m .	48°: 10 ^W . N.	6°: 15 ^W .	Ushant N. 70°: 41 ^E . Dist. 18 Leagues	P. M. Fresh Gales and Squally W ^r ; $\frac{1}{2}$ past Noon, made the Signal to Wear and come to the Wind on the Larb ^d Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 1 made the Powerful and Swiftsure's Signals to take their Stations 2 or 3 Miles N. W. from the Admiral, $\frac{1}{4}$ after 3 made the Signal to wear to come to the Wind on the Starb ^d Tack, and the general Signal to keep in closer Order; at Sun-set a strange Cutter in Sight, at 12 made the Signal to Wear; A.M. Fresh Breezes and Thick hazy W ^r , $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 the Powerful made the Signal to speak with the Admiral—made the general Signal for the Squadron to close, $\frac{1}{4}$ after the Queen Charlotte made the Signal to speak with the Admiral, at 11 hove too and made the Powerful and Queen Charlotte's Signals for Lieutenants, gave an Order to the Duke to supply the former with Water, and One to the Alexander to supply the latter with a fortnight's Provisions: sounded in 73 fathoms—Squadron in Company, except Impetueux, Minotaur, Bellerophon, Marlboro', Phœbe, Aquilon, St. Fiorenzo, and Sylph Brig.
Thursday	22	S.W.b.S.	W. b. N.	6 ^m .	48°: 06 ^W . N.	6°: 10 ^W .	Ushant N. 64°: 43 ^E . Dist. 18 Leagues	P.M. Moderate and Thick hazy W ^r ; at 1 made the Signal with a Gun, to recall a distant Ship, answered the private Signal to St. Fiorenzo, Bellerophon joined Company, $\frac{1}{4}$ after 2 made the Fiorenzo's Signal to come within Hale

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dift.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	REMARKS, &c.
	December 1796.							Hale and for a Lieut: Ordered the Edgar to supply her with 5 Tons of Water, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 made the general Signal that the Admiral intended making Sail after the Close of Day—Thick foggy W ^r fired the Fog Gun every hour, at 4 made the Bellerophon's Signal to come within Hale—A.M. Thick foggy W ^r ; $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the Powerful made the Signal for 3 Sail South, made the Fiorenzo's Signal to look out S. E. and the Signal with a Gun to recall distant Ships, $\frac{1}{4}$ after the Aquilon's Signal to come within Hale, made the Signal to form the Order of Sailing, joined Company Impetueux, Minotaur, Swiftsure, Phœbe, and Aquilon, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 made the Fiorenzo's Signal to chase N. E. and the Aquilon's to look out S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ past 9 Fiorenzo made the Signal for seeing a Frigate N. E. and Merchant Ships East, $\frac{1}{4}$ after answered private Signal to the Revolutionaire, and for speaking with the Admiral, made her Signal and the Phaeton's to join immediately, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 10 the Minotaur made the Signal for having sprung a Top Mast, at 11 made the Signal to bring too, joined Company the Revolutionaire and Phaeton, received by Capt ^a Cole a Letter of the 16 th Ins ^t from S ^r E ^d Pellew with Intelligence of the French Fleet at Brest on that Day, directed Capt ^a Cole to work up to Ushant and endeavour to fall in with any Ship that might be there looking out for me—Ordered the Impetueux to supply the Phaeton with a Month's Provisions, Water, and Necessaries, $\frac{1}{2}$ past made the Signal to close round the Admiral: Squadron in Company, except Marlborough.
Friday	23	S.E.b.E. Variable. W.b.S.	S.b.W. — N.W.b.N	35°. 48°: 40°. N. Dist. 19 Leagues	6°: 22. W ^r . Ushant S. 78°: 34°. E ^r .		P. M. Moderate Breezes with Thick hazy W ^r ; $\frac{1}{4}$ past 1 made the Signal to Wear, at 2 made the Revolutionaire's Signal to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 8 made the Signal to Wear and to bring too on the Larb ^d Tack, at 11 the Signal to make Sail after lying by— A. M.	

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dist.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	REMARKS, &c.
								A. M. Fresh Breezes and Cloudy W ^r with Rain; at 4 made the Signal to bring too on the Starb ^d Tack, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 sounded in 76 Fathoms, and made the general Signal for the Squadron to close with 3 Guns at different Times, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 made the general Signal of Recal from Chase, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Signal for the Squadron to close, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 answered Minotaur 1 Sail N. W. made her Signal to close, joined Company the Marlboro' and Anson, wrote their Lordships by Capt ^r Durham, and transmitted at same time Copy of Sir Edw ^d Pellew's Letter of the 16 th Inst ^r (received the 22 nd by Revolutionaire) $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 made the Aquilon's Signal to examine a Stranger, made the Signal for the Ships to close—Squadron in Company, except Sylph.
December 1796.								P. M. Fresh Gales and hazy W ^r with rain, $\frac{1}{2}$ past Noon Aquilon made the Signal that the Chase was a Friend, $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Anson's Signal to come within Hale (which was not answered) $\frac{1}{2}$ after the general Signal with a Gun for the Squadron to close, Thick hazy Weather with a heavy Gale, set the Storm Stay Sails, at 4 a strange Brig in Company, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 a Ship to Leeward made the Private Signal to the Admiral—A. M. Fresh Gales and Cloudy W ^r , $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the Signal for the Squadron to close, $\frac{1}{2}$ after to Wear, at 9 the Phaeton's Signal to come within Hale, and the general Signal to prepare Weekly Accounts, $\frac{1}{2}$ past the Aquilon's to look out N. E. answ ^d her Signal that the Chase was a Friend, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 the Signal to bring too, and the Phaeton's Signal for a Lieut: $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the Revolutionaire's Signal for her Captain, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 the general Signal for Weekly Accounts, dispatch'd Capt ^r Cole to Lisbon with Intelligence to Vice Adm ^r Vandeput, or the Commanding Officer of H. M. Ships there, of the French Fleet having sailed from Brest on the 16 Inst ^r . Squadron in Company, except Impetueux.
Saturday	24	E. b. S.	S. b. E.	40 ^m . 48°:01' N. 6°:33' W.		Ushant N. 66° E. Dist. 23 Leag.		
		East.	N. N. E.					

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dift.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	R E M A R K S, &c.
December 1796.								P. M. Fresh Breezes and Cloudy W ^r . at Noon the Revolutionaire parted Company, answered Aquilon's Signal for 2 Sail N. N. E. 1 N. and 1 N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 1 that the Ships seen were of the Line, the Sylph joined Company, made the Phoebe's Signal to look out N. E. directed the Edgar to supply the Phaeton with Provis ^s and Water, &c. and ordered Capt ^r Stopford to proceed to Spithead with the said Ship accordingly; informed their Lordships therewith, and of my having dispatched the Revolutionaire to Lisbon with an Account of the Enemy's sailing from Brest on the 16 th Inst. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 made the St. Fiorenzo's Signal to examine a Stranger, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 3 the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale, and for distant ships to close with the Admiral, $\frac{1}{4}$ after the general Signal for making sail after lying by, at 4 the Signal for the Squadron to cloe, $\frac{1}{2}$ past answered Aquilon to speak with the Admiral—A. M. strong Gales and Cloudy W ^r ; at 8 answered Marlbro' 1 Sail N. E. and b. E. made the Signal for the Squadron to keep in the Admiral's Wake, $\frac{1}{2}$ past the Signal to Wear, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 the Powerful made the Signal for not being able to keep Company, answered ditto, and directed her to proceed to the nearest Port—Strong Gales and Squally W ^r . Squadron in Company, except Impetueux.
Sunday	25	S.E.	E.N.E.	51 ^m . 48°: 52 ^W . N.	6°: 38 ^W .	Ushant S. 70°: 40 ^W . E. Dist. 23 Leagues		
		S.E.	N.E.					
Monday	26	E. S. E.	S. b. W.					P. M. Strong Gales and Squally W ^r ; at Noon got the Top Gall ^l Masts on Deck, A. M. at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the general Signal to Wear and to close round the Admiral, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 made the St. Fiorenzo's Signal to come within Hale.—sounded in 80 F ^m $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 answered Queen Charlotte's Signal for 1 Sail N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the general Signal for the Squadron to keep in more open Order, at 10 spoke the St. Fiorenzo, and directed her to proceed into Port, being short of Water; and inform their Lordships with his Arrival P
		Ditto.	S. S. W.	28 ^m . 48°: 47 ^W .	7°: 17 ^W .	Scilly N. 19°: 45 ^W . E. Dist. 24 Leagues		
		S. E.	S. S. W.					

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dift.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	REMARKS, &c.
								rival, and that the Powerful had parted Company Yesterday for the nearest Port, she also being short of Water, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 answered Marlbro' for Soundings in 80 Fms: Squadron in Company, except Impetueux.
December 1796.								
Tuesday	27	S. b. E.	S.W.b.W	23 ^m . 49°: 13 [#] . N.	7°: 6 [#] . W.	N. 22°: 30 [#] . E. Dist. 15 Leag.	Scilly	P. M.—Moderate Breezes with a heavy Swell; made the Phœbe's Signal to look out S. S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 answered a Ship to Leeward (supposed to be Swiftsure) that she wanted to lye by—made the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale, and directed her to speak with the Ship to Leeward that had made the Signal—at 11 the general Signal to bring too on the Larboard Tack.—A. M. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 the general Signal to Wear, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale, who informed me that the Swiftsure had carried away her Main Top Mast, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 the Sylph made the Signal for 2 Sail N. E. by E. and that they were of the Line, made her Signal to look out S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 answered Marlbro' 1 Sail W. S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Impetueux joined Company and made the Signal to speak with the Admiral; $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 the Minotaur made the Signal for Soundings in 65 Fms: Squadron in Company.
Wednesday	28	E.S.E.	S. W.	19 ^m . 49°: 25 [#] . N.	7°: 28 [#] . W.	N. 46°: 50 [#] . E. Dist. 14 Leagues	Scilly	P. M. Fresh Breezes and Hazy W'; at 1 made the general Signal with 4 Guns to Wear, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale—sent her to the Impetueux to know what Intelligence she had for the Admiral— $\frac{1}{2}$ after the general Signal for the Squadron to close, at 2 the Queen Charlotte made the Signal that the Impetueux wanted to speak with the Admiral—A. M. Strong Gales and Squally, with Rain, none of the Squadron in Sight—at 3 the Signal to Wear, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale, received by her Intelligence from Capt ⁿ Payne of the French Fleet having sailed from Brest on the 16 th Inst. and that he had fallen in with them on the 24 th much.
		Variable.	E. S. E.					

Week Day.	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dist.	Lat. in	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	R E M A R K S , &c.
December 1796.								much dispersed— $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 made the Rendezvous Signal off the Lizard—at 11 answered the Queen Charlotte's Signal for Soundings in 70 Fathoms, at 12 the general Signal to Wear—Squadron in Company.
Thursday 29		S. b. W.	W. b. S.					P. M. Fresh Gales and Hazy W ^r ; at noon answered Minotaur for Soundings in 65 F ^m made the general Signal of Rendezvous off the Lizard, $\frac{1}{4}$ after the Phœbe made the Signal that she was not able to comply with those made by the Admiral, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 the Defiance made the Signal that she had sprung a Top Mast, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 the Queen Charlotte made the Signal for Soundings in 72 F ^m .—A. M. Strong Gales and Squally W ^r , with Rain, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the general Signal to bear up and steer S. E. and b. S. at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 answered Glory for seeing 2 Sail of the Line—Fresh Gales and Thick W ^r . $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 made the Aquilon's Signal to look out S. S. E. at Noon 15 of the Squadron in Company.
		Ditto.	W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	14	49° : 25"	7° 30"	Scilly N. 47 E. Distant 14 Leag.	
Friday 30		S. S. W.	W. N. W.					
		W. S. W.	S. S. E.					P. M. Fresh Gales and Squally W ^r ; $\frac{1}{2}$ past Noon answered Sylph's Signal for 3 Sail S. and b. E. and Aquilon's for 3 Sail S. E. b. S. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 1 made the general Signal for the Bearings and Distance of Scilly, $\frac{1}{4}$ after 2 the Aquilon's Signal to go a-head during Night and carry a Light, and the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale, $\frac{1}{2}$ after the general Signal for each Ship to carry a Light, $\frac{1}{2}$ after 3 answered Marlbro' for Soundings in 65 F ^m . A. M. Strong Gales and Squally with Rain and Thick Weather, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 made the Marlborough's Signal to found, answered ditto for Soundings in 53 F ^m , $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 made the general Signal to found, $\frac{1}{4}$ after the general Signal for the Bearings and Distance of the Lizard, $\frac{1}{2}$ after 9 the general Signal to haul the Wind on the Larb ^d Tack, answered Marlbro' for Soundings in 50 F ^m .
		S. W. b. S.	S. E. b. S.					P. M.

Week Day	Mo. Day.	Winds.	Courses.	Dift.	Lat. in.	Long. in.	Bearings and Distances.	R E M A R K S, &c.
December 1796.		S. W.	S. E.					P. M. Fresh Gales with heavy Rain and Thick Weather, $\frac{1}{2}$ after made the general Signal to steer S. E. b. S. and for the Marlborough and Sylph to go a-head during Night, and for each Ship to carry a Light, at 4 made the general Signal that the Admiral meant to found every Two Hours after dark.—A. M. At 7 the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale; ordered her to make the Land, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 made the Impetueux Signal to look out N. b. E. and the Marlborough's to look out E. N. E.—answered Marlbro' for the Land bearing N. W. b. N. distant 4 Leagues, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 made the Sylph's Signal to come within Hale, directed Capt' White to proceed to Falmouth and join Sir Jn ^d Warren, at 10 the general Signal for seeing Land.
Saturday	31	W. S. W.	E. b. S.					
		S. S. W.	Eaft.					

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